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ABSTRACT

       Three issues of this newsletter of the National Institute on
Disability and Rehabilitation Research (NIDRR) provide articles, columns by
the Institute Director, and news items. The major articles include: "Adapting
the Marketing Concept to the Dissemination and Utilization of Disability
Research"; "NIDRR Grantees' Q & A about Marketing"; "Using Market Research
Strategies with Disability Research Results"; "Using Market Research for the
Dissemination and Utilization of Disability Research"; "Making Market
Research Useful"; "Putting Market Research to Work for Your Project";
"Grantees Implement Marketing Concepts"; "Market Research Tools"; "How the
Model SCI System Manages Its Dissemination Plan" (Lesley M. Hudson); "Getting
the Most from Research Information" (Mitch Fillhaber); "Marketing Related
Activities Conducted as Part of 'Promoting the Practice of Universal Design,'
a Field-Initiated Project" (Molly Follette Story); "The Development of an
Individualized Marketing Strategy for Job Development for People with Severe
Disabilities" (Melinda Mast and Joan Sweeney); "A Process for Turning
Research Information and Information about Research into Something of Meaning
for Consumers" (Ken Gerhart); and "An RERC's Dissemination Strategy for
Utilization" (Joseph P. Lane and Douglas J. Usiak). (DB)

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Research Exchange

This newsletter is
available in alternate
formats upon request.

SEDL
Southwest Educational
Development Laboratory

NIDRR
National Institute on Disability
and Rehabilitation Research

Adapting the Marketing Concept to the Dissemination and Utilization of Disability Research

"Step right up, folks, step right up! Get it here; get your disability research info, state-of-the-art, not available anywhere else...get it right here!...."

To many, such hucksterism is symbolic of their perceptions of marketing. However, today's marketing extends beyond advertising to address the needs of targeted users. A number of grantees funded through the National Institute on Disability and Rehabilitation Research (NIDRR) have expressed an interest in applying ideas from the field of marketing to improve their dissemination and utilization (D&U) efforts. NCDDR staff reviewed a number of current sources to see how the marketing concept can be applied to disability research in ways that increase the use of research-based information.

A wide range of research areas are described in NIDRR's Long Range Plan such as: employment, health, technology, community integration, independent living, disability statistics and others. NIDRR's grantees must strive to disseminate their grant-sponsored outcomes to promote utilization and benefits within a variety of target audiences including people with disabilities. While NIDRR-funded researchers may be more experienced in research design and methodologies than in marketing, a need exists to enhance broader awareness of project activities and utilization of research outcomes.

This issue of *The Research Exchange* provides an overview of marketing

As the NCDDR launches a new scope-of-work, staff continue to capture and suggest new strategies and understandings to assist in the process of moving research outcomes into practice. Effective planning and implementation of dissemination practices can facilitate bridging the gap between the research environment and the world of practice.

As the paradigm of disability continues to change in the new millennium, our challenge of effectively disseminating disability research outcomes for routine use by appropriate end-users is growing. In our new Information Age, effective dissemination requires awareness of the information sources that are competing for the attention of the same end-user groups. Potential *users* of disability research outcomes will increasingly appraise outcomes based on their:

- ease of understanding,
- ease of access and use,
- perceived value or benefit resulting from application of the outcomes, and
- relevance of the research outcomes to the personal lives and current circumstances of the intended user.

In addition to information related to effective dissemination practices previously reported by the NCDDR, it appears appropriate to consider benefits that may be gained by analyzing the applicability of the *marketing concept* in order to better understand new strategies that may enhance greater utilization of disability research outcomes.

This issue of *The Research Exchange* relates previously shared dissemination and utilization (D&U) literature to strategies and techniques from the field of marketing. Our concept of marketing does not focus on the sale of products but rather focuses on ways to enhance the attraction and use of research information by appropriate end-user groups.

The application of selected marketing practices should help in realizing goals such as the following, from the Education Department Grants Administrative Regulations (EDGAR):

§ 75.192 Dissemination.
If an applicant proposes to publish and disseminate curricula or Instructional materials under a grant, the applicant shall include an assurance in its application that the curricula or materials will reach the populations for which the curricula or materials were developed. (Authority: 20 U.S.C. 1221e-3 and 3474)

The goal in this issue is to link D&U principles to corresponding and enhancing principles of effective marketing. Our understanding of information utilization is enhanced by adapting and appropriately applying strategies and techniques from the marketing literature. It is our hope that this "marriage of concepts" might cause us to analyze in a different way what has been routinely done, and provide some new ideas that may help us increase the effectiveness of our outreach efforts.

John D. Westbrook, Ph.D.
Director, NCDDR

Adapting the Marketing Concept,
continued from page 1

as it relates to and strengthens D&U activities. Our goal is to show how marketing can be adapted and applied to enhance the dissemination efforts of NIDRR grantees in varied settings, using existing resources. Grantees are provided with strategies that: (a) aid in identifying potential users and user groups; (b) assist in determining user needs and concerns; and (c) include a set of proactive marketing and market research techniques for efficiently and effectively disseminating information in ways that promote utilization.

Marketing offers insights into new strategies to increase the availability, understanding, and awareness of research-based information, rather than increase the sale of books, training modules, or other materials developed with federal funds. The two following issues will examine market research (Volume 5, Number 2) and marketing strategies (Volume 5, Number 3) in more detail, and will highlight successful les used by NIDRR grantees.

The Dissemination and Utilization Process

"The goal of dissemination is not, as many researchers believe, simply to get the word out, but to get the word *used*" (Westbrook & Boethel, 1997). From this perspective, dissemination is an integral part of a research project's planning and implementation. As Yin and Moore (in Fuhrman, 1994) state, "Research utilization begins when research and development begin, and is not a sequential step that only follows research and development" (p.142). Past issues of *The Research Exchange* (Volume 1, Number 4 [1996], Volume 3, Number 4 [1998]) and other NCDDR documents (NCDDR, 1996a&b; Westbrook & Boethel, 1997) have provided information on the D&U process and its components, including:

- The **User**, or intended user, of the information or product to be disseminated;
- The dissemination **Source**, that is, the agency, organization, or individual responsible for creating the new

knowledge or product, and/or for conducting dissemination activities;
- The **Content** or message that is disseminated, that is, the new knowledge or product itself, as well as any supporting information or materials;
- The dissemination **Medium**, that is, the ways in which the knowledge or product is described, "packaged," and transmitted; and
- The **Context** in which the knowledge or product is developed and disseminated, including contextual factors related to the source, the user, the content, and the dissemination medium (adapted from Westbrook & Boethel, 1997).

The D&U process and the marketing concept correspond to each other (a) through relationships among their components and elements; (b) by the potential role of marketing and dissemination in overall research project design and in the design of the resulting presentation of research-based information; and (c) through a common emphasis on influencing users to adopt the "product," or

Acknowledging NIDRR's Role in Current Research

The National Institute on Disability and Rehabilitation Research (NIDRR) is a major funding source for disability research and related activities. The degree to which NIDRR is readily recognized in this role, however, depends to a large extent upon the actions of individual NIDRR grantees. Specifically, the extent to which grantees ensure that NIDRR's support of their work and outcomes is clear and obvious, the greater the public awareness of NIDRR and its valuable contributions. Attribution to and acknowledgement of NIDRR is essential to promote NIDRR's ability to continue supporting worthwhile research efforts within the disability community.

NIDRR-funded research encompasses a wide range of areas and topics. The recently introduced *Long-Range Plan for Fiscal Years 1999-2003* describes five major research programs:

- Employment Outcomes
- Health and Function
- Technology for Access and Function
- Independent Living and Community Integration
- Associated Disability Research Areas

In addition, there are three related programs: Knowledge Dissemination and Utilization, Capacity Building for Rehabilitation Research, and Strategies for Research Management. This programmatic approach serves to group grantees by a focus area, rather than by funding mechanism as has been done in the past. NIDRR is the link that brings these varied researchers together to share new information about their chosen topics. Grantees are encouraged to identify and communicate with other NIDRR-funded projects that have similar research interests related to both current and projected work.
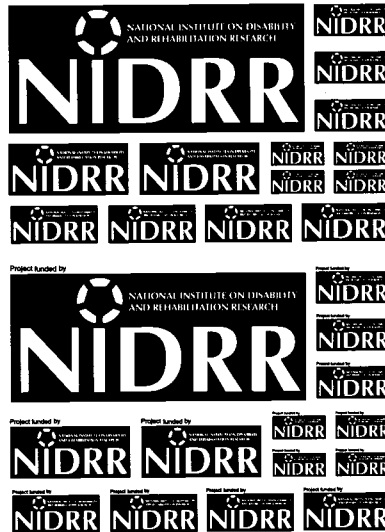
The NIDRR logo sheet is available free from NCDDR.

The acknowledgement of NIDRR on products developed by grantees helps raise awareness of and develop an identity for NIDRR research. Working with NIDRR staff, the NCDDR and its graphic designer have developed camera-ready artwork presenting the new NIDRR logo in a variety of sizes. The logo can be used on all paper and other hard copy products that were developed from NIDRR-funded research. Each 8 1/2 by 11 inch sheet (80 lb. glossy paper) provides multiple copies of the logo in five different sizes. Grantees may contact the NCDDR to request one or more sheets, free of charge.

For the World Wide Web and other electronic media, the NIDRR logo can be used to identify Web pages that share information about NIDRR research. Grantees can download four different versions of the NIDRR logo from the NCDDR's Web site: <http://www.ncddr.org/temp/nidrr/nidrr.html>. The HTML source code for each version of the logo is provided. In addition, original Adobe™ Photoshop Document files may be downloaded via FTP for custom use.

Using the NIDRR logo provides a visual means of tying NIDRR's research programs together. The logo serves the marketing concept of *branding*. Anyone who sees the *"NIDRR brand"* will recognize the product as representing the state-of-the-art in disability and rehabilitation research.

"Branding is the act of creating specific impressions that contribute to an overall image or attitude about a brand among a target group of customers" (The Brand Consultancy, 2000). This image or attitude includes emotional as well as tangible elements. Users more readily accept ideas from sources they know and trust. In the dissemination and utilization process, *source* involves the perception of credibility and reliability of the originator of the information to be shared.

Using the NIDRR brand can also benefit grantees. Being linked with NIDRR can help answer the question, "What is it about my project that makes it different?" Association with a respected research program will help raise the perception of the timeliness, reliability, quality, and trustworthiness of projects funded by NIDRR. Increased visibility and awareness of NIDRR's work, through its many expert grantees, will establish an implied value for new research carried out under a NIDRR grant. Over time, NIDRR research will be recognized by a wider audience as a valuable public information source.

The Brand Consultancy. (2000). Frequently asked questions: 2. What is branding? Retrieved February 22, 2000 from the World Wide Web: <http://www.brandconsult.com/FAQFrames/FAQ.htm>

A SPECIAL NOTE CONCERNING Advertising and Public Relations Costs

The Federal Office of Management and Budget (OMB) distinguishes between advertising and public relations in their *Cost Principles for Non Profit Organizations, Circular A-122* (OMB, 1998a) and in their *Cost Principles for Educational Institutions, Circular A-21* (OMB, 1998b) which detail allowable costs for programs funded under federal grants, contracts, or other agreements. Both *Circulars* indicate the following:

1. Advertising and public relations costs.

a. The term advertising costs means the costs of advertising media and corollary administrative costs. Advertising media include magazines, newspapers, radio and television programs, direct mail, exhibits, and the like.

b. The term public relations includes community relations and means those activities dedicated to maintaining the image of the organization or maintaining or promoting understanding and favorable relations with the community or public at large or any segment of the public.

c. The only allowable advertising costs are those which are solely for:

   1. The recruitment of personnel required for the performance by the organization of obligations arising under a sponsored award, when considered in conjunction with all other recruitment costs, as set forth in paragraph 44 ("Recruiting costs");

   2. The procurement of goods and services for the performance of a sponsored award; . . . .

   4. Other specific purposes necessary to meet the requirements of the sponsored award.

d. The only allowable public relations costs are:

   1. Costs specifically required by sponsored awards;

   2. Costs of communicating with the public and press pertaining to specific activities or accomplishments which result from performance of sponsored awards (these costs are considered necessary as part of the outreach effort for the sponsored awards); or

   3. Costs of conducting general liaison with news media and government public relations officers, to the extent that such activities are limited to communication and liaison necessary to keep the public informed on matters of public concern, such as notices of contract/grant awards, financial matters, etc. . . . .

Additionally, the following "Unallowable advertising and public relations costs" should be noted by all NIDRR-funded researchers:

   1. All advertising and public relations costs other than as specified in subparagraphs c, d, and e; . . . .

   4. Costs of advertising and public relations designed solely to promote the organization.

   (OMB, 1998a, Section 1; OMB 1998b, Section J)

These *Cost Principles* discourage the use of advertising, as defined in the *Circulars,* in the dissemination of NIDRR-funded research outcomes. However, public relations, as defined in the *Circulars,* may include the dissemination and marketing strategies described in this issue of *The Research Exchange* as "part of the outreach effort for the sponsored awards." This distinction requires that grantees ensure that the content of their dissemination/marketing activity pertains to their research and not their institution, center, or program.

The *Cost Principles* also imply that grantees should exercise caution in promoting their research results, particularly in advertising the sale of research information. This may be accomplished by openly sharing research outcomes as public relations information in a variety of media and by emphasizing the utilization of research outcomes by targeted users.

The *Cost Principles* apply only to the use of federal funds for advertising and public relations. Many organizations have separate funding that can be used for activities that are not allowed in the *Cost Principles.* The separate use and accounting of such funds provide more latitude in advertising and promoting programs and services, but must be kept apart from activities that use federal funds.

White House Office of Management and Budget (OMB). (1998a). *OMB Circular A-122: Cost principles for non-profit organizations* (Rev. 06/01/98). Washington, DC: Office of Management and Budget. Retrieved February 17, 2000 from the World Wide Web: <http://www.whitehouse.gov/OMB/circulars/a122/a122.html>

White House Office of Management and Budget (OMB). (1998b). *OMB Circular A-21: Cost principles for educational institutions* (Rev. 10/27/98). Washington, DC: Office of Management and Budget. Retrieved February 17, 2000 from the World Wide Web: <http://www.whitehouse.gov/OMB/circulars/a021/a021.html>

Adapting the Marketing Concept, *continued from page 2*

research-based information, in ways that improve their awareness and result in behavior change. Infusing the marketing concept into dissemination activities provides a powerful set of tools that will assist grantees in developing strategies that respond to the needs of their users.

The Marketing Concept

Advertising and promotion are important facets of marketing and are often thought of as synonymous with marketing. However, the modern business marketing concept extends beyond these activities to include all phases of product development, distribution, and utilization. "Marketing is a systems process of planning and executing the conception, pricing, promotion, and distribution of ideas, goods, or services for exchange in an effort to satisfy the consumer's and the marketer's objectives" (Klivans, 1997). The marketing concept focuses on the user, "on learning what people want and need rather than trying to persuade them to buy what we happen to be producing" (Weinreich, 1999).

Marketing and D&U are most effective when the process begins at the development or design stage and evolves throughout the entire project. For NIDRR-funded research, this process begins with user comments sent to NIDRR prior to publication of the final "Requests for Proposals." Once funding is awarded, a grantee may include users in market research activities when the final research design is developed, when the research study is conducted, and when the research-based information is developed and disseminated. The process culminates when the researcher evaluates utilization of the research study's information in the form of changed policies or practices and improvements in the users' lives.

Marketing and disseminating are often viewed as promoting and distributing products, including research-based information, without the systematic involvement of customers or users. This notion is consistent with business practices that are historically production-oriented. Businesses and researchers try to predict users' needs by producing innovative "products" such as automobiles, computers, training strategies, and

assistive devices. The production orientation follows the old saying "If you build a better mousetrap the world will beat a path to your door." Marketing that follows a production or selling philosophy focuses on gains for the producer, and not necessarily gains for the customer or user (Griffith, 1997).

Many businesses, researchers, and service organizations find that the "path" is more widely "beaten" if they work with targeted users to make sure that their product results in a "better mousetrap." This is particularly necessary in developing user-responsive research studies and user-friendly research-based information.

Social Marketing and D&U

Kotler and Andreasen (in Weinreich, 1999) define social marketing as:...differing from other areas of marketing only with respect to the objectives of the marketer and his or her organization. Social marketing seeks to influence social behaviors not to the benefit of the marketer, but to benefit the target audience and the general society (p.1).

Social marketing has evolved from one-dimensional public service announcements to a sophisticated approach based on the marketing concept. Rather than providing information from "top down" sources, today's social marketers are listening to the needs and desires of their users, and shaping their marketing strategies to meet those needs. A focus on the user of information, services, or products as a valued customer requires ongoing market research to develop the program revisions necessary to meet their needs (Weinreich, 1999).

Social marketing adapts the business marketing concept by interpreting it in terms of a different bottom line—that of changing user awareness and behavior. This requires social marketing strategies that are in tune with users' beliefs, cultural practices, environments, and established behaviors, and that add beneficial behaviors or adapt users' current behaviors to improve their quality of life.

The Social Marketing Mix

Social marketing adapts the business "marketing mix" (Perreault & McCarthy, 1996) by configuring each element (Product, Place, Price, and Promotion) to reflect variations in users' information needs, styles, and abilities to receive and understand behavior change or research-based information. In the following "social marketing mix," each element is described in relation to dissemination and utilization components.

Product. Products vary from the use of tangible goods, such as increasing the use of insecticide-impregnated mosquito nets in sub-Sahara Africa (NPR, 1999); to services, such as person-centered planning; and to user behaviors, such as cessation of drug use. The concept of "product" also includes research-based information that presents new ideas, such as policy changes, which may lead users to change or adapt their behavior.

In D&U activities, the perceived credibility of the *source* of the research-based information plays a major role in its desirability (NCDDR, 1996). Researchers who have extensively worked with users and have favorable reputations may be more likely to have their information utilized. Additionally, "the research *content* should take the user from awareness to understanding to commitment" (NCDDR, 1996, p.4). The research-based information "product" should be easily understood and perceived as useful before users commit to behavior change.

Place. For tangible products or services, "place" refers to the distribution system, from manufacturer to retailer to customer, or from the service provider to the service user. The places for disseminating research-based information vary according to the user's ability and willingness to access locations or media such as community centers, meetings, email listservs, Web sites, televised or radio public service announcements, and many other possibilities.

In D&U activities, place correlates with: (a) the *medium* through which research information reaches potential users; (b) the users' *context* for receiving and utilizing the information; and (c) the logistics involved in accessing the *source* of the information.

Adapting the Marketing Concept, *continued from page 5*

Price. Social marketing focuses on the cost and value of a product, including costs to the user and benefits, which may or may not surpass those costs. In some cases, a presentation of research-based information may be perceived as low in value if there are no costs involved. Some nominal costs may increase the perceived value of the information by conferring a sense of dignity to the transaction. However, high costs can lead to weighing potential benefits against the cost of receiving the information (Weinreich, 1999).

Price also interacts with the "place" where users access the information or interact with its *source*. In D&U activities, "price" may be influenced by the *context* in which users receive the research-based information. A dissemination activity that is offered at a location that is difficult to access may increase its overall cost and decrease its value. This factor is particularly apparent in situations where users have to travel long distances to interact with the information's *source;* where there is a lack of suitable public transportation; when users spend a long time waiting for services; or when child care is not available.

Additionally, the *medium* for transmitting research information, such as training manuals, fact sheets, and Web pages, may have an impact on cost and value. For example, if costly computer equipment is required to access research-based information, these costs may be more than users are willing or able to spend for the perceived value they would receive from online research information.

Promotion. Promotion relies on market research to determine the most effective and efficient methods necessary to reach the target audience and to increase demand for the product or research-based information. A promotion strategy focuses on reaching the audience in ways that gain their interest and meet their information needs.

For NIDRR-funded research, promotion includes *user* involvement from research design to dissemination of results, as well as the *media* and *content* selected in an "integrated use of advertising, public relations, promotions,

media advocacy, personal selling, and entertainment vehicles" (Weinreich, 1999, p.2).

Expanded Social Marketing Mix

Weinreich (1999) adds the following three considerations to the social marketing mix. These describe interactions between the *source* of the research-based information and the *users' context* in receiving and utilizing the information. Grantees are likely to encounter these considerations during dissemination and market research activities, and may need to adapt their strategies to achieve utilization of their information.

Partnerships. Researchers may team with organizations that show an interest in their research-based information. For NIDRR grantees this involves partnering with other grantees, projects, or service providers to develop common market research and D&U activities. Most likely, other organizations are not direct competitors for the attention of users. Working with them could improve the credibility of the overall *source* of research-based information and produce a combined effort to influence users' awareness and behavior change.

Several groups of NIDRR grantees have formed associations to promote collaborative activities, such as the National Association of Rehabilitation Research and Training Centers (NARRTC). These associations could serve as foundations for developing partnerships to conduct market research and develop dissemination activities that reach a broader range of users.

Policy. Many organizations have policies that are based on service models, such as group homes, day treatment centers, and other traditional services. Often policy changes are needed to allow an organization to use research-based information to change or add to their services. Researchers may work with organizations to change their policies to allow innovative services or to field test the use of new service concepts.

Politics. Some potentially controversial research outcomes require political
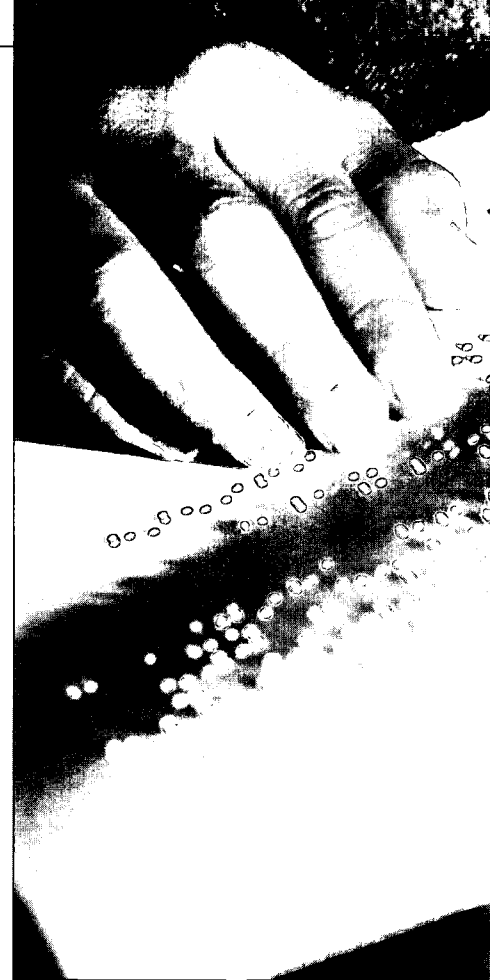
diplomacy with community organizations to gain access to the target audience and to gain support for utilization of the research-based information. Ongoing interactions with relevant national organizations can help assure that personalities and politics do not impede utilization at the local level. For instance, working with the National Arc on utilizing a new community living strategy may allow the researcher to gain inroads into working with a local chapter. Additionally, researchers may identify key persons in user organizations who are receptive to the research-based information and who may be able to introduce it to their colleagues in ways that avoid or successfully confront political barriers.

Market research can provide valuable tools for evaluating the partnership, policy, and political *contexts* of users. Such techniques as user visits and focus groups can help in evaluating existing partnerships and the desire for new partners. They also can assist in examining the users' policies through discussions with managers, staff, consumers, and others, and can help to identify political factors that may support or hinder utilization.

Barriers in Social Marketing

In social marketing, competition is defined from the user's standpoint rather than that of the marketer. A primary question concerning competition is "What alternative choices do users face in selecting and using the product or research-based information?" It is the marketer's task to address the variety of choices and steer users toward awareness and behavior change. Four types of competition are identified in social marketing (Andreasen, 1995). These provide a useful framework for understanding competing factors faced by individual users. (See the chart below.)

It is important that researchers listen carefully to users in order to identify the competition and its influence. At times, competition may be minimal, such as when new computer screen reader software is introduced to a person with a visual impairment to help him/her read material that might otherwise be converted to Braille. In this case, the person's tendency to rely on Braille (desire competition) is conquered by training and support in using the screen

reader. At other times competition may hinder awareness and behavior change, such as when traditional service providers balk at providing community inclusive services (service form competition), fearful of funding changes, administrative adjustments, inexperience, community perceptions, political issues, or other competing factors.

The *content* of research-based information and the *media* used to present it provide elements of competition for the attention of users. For example, one grantee may publish a research-based policy change paper in a policy journal as a dissemination activity. Another grantee may use a variety of dissemination methods including: (a) publishing a policy change paper in a similar journal; (b) meeting with legislators and people who are potentially impacted by the policy change; (c) providing fact sheets about the proposed policy change; (d) distributing a press kit to local and major disability and popular media; and (e) following-up the press kit with media interviews about the proposed policy change. In this case, awareness and behavior change are influenced by

competing dissemination *content, media,* and the extent of effort used in reaching targeted users.
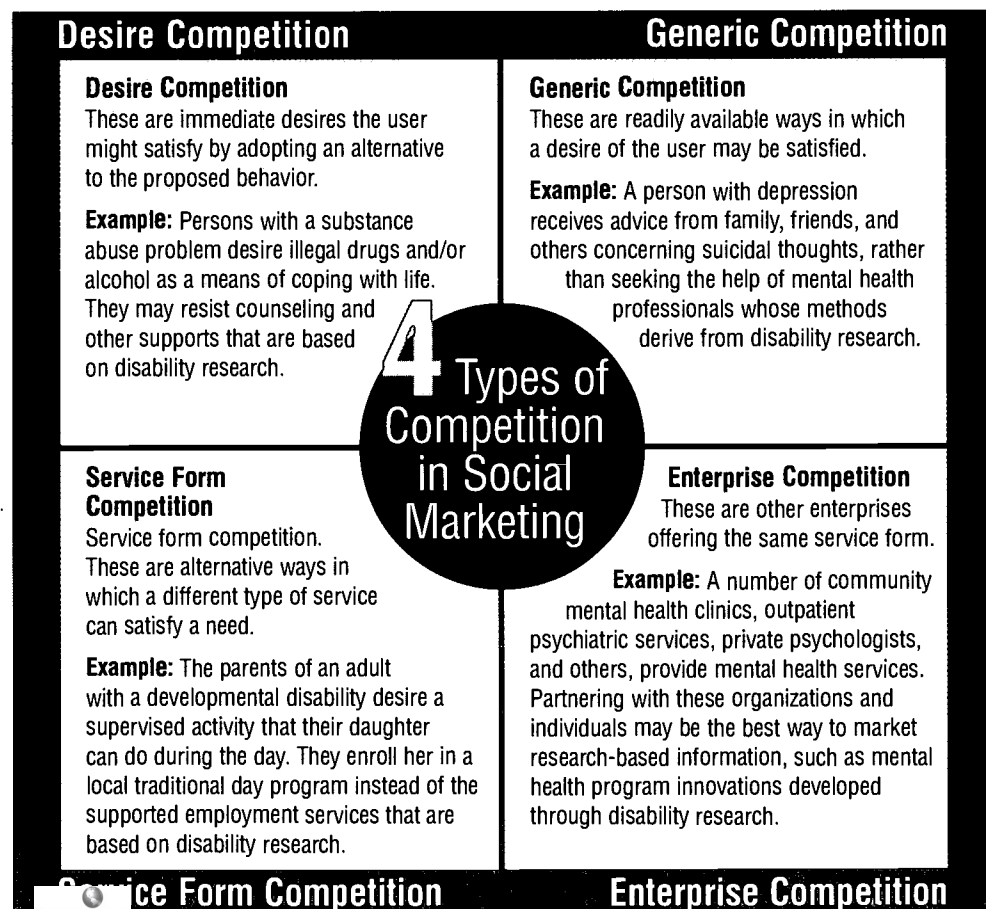
By using market research techniques, researchers can define and understand the factors that compete for users' attention and awareness. This information can help researchers develop an effective dissemination strategy that addresses issues of competition. Information about market research techniques is included in the "Using Market Research Strategies with Disability Research Results" section of this issue of *The Research Exchange.*

Developing a Social Marketing Dissemination and Utilization Strategy

Effective D&U strategies may incorporate elements of the social marketing mix. The first step in developing such a strategy involves the use of exploratory market research to define target users and to identify their information and behavior change needs. Next, one or more target objectives are developed including the users' *performance* (what they will do), *conditions* (where and/or when they will perform the behavior), and *criterion* for accomplishing the objective (how often or accurately they will perform the behavior) (Mager, 1984). Target objectives provide a central focus for all activities outlined in a social marketing D&U strategy.

In developing activities to implement the target objective(s), it may be helpful for grantees to arrange materials, methods, and activities according to the elements of the social marketing mix (Product, Place, Price, and Promotion). An evaluation strategy to measure utilization of the research-based information is essential to determining whether the target criterion is achieved.

The following example of a social marketing D&U strategy (p. 8) is a sample of a plan developed in collaboration with the RRTC on Workplace Supports and NCDDR staff to increase awareness of research on employer incentives, job accommodations, and employment training strategies among business communities, employers, and service providers, with a goal of increasing the employment of people with disabilities.

Desire Competition | Generic Competition

Desire Competition
These are immediate desires the user might satisfy by adopting an alternative to the proposed behavior.

Example: Persons with a substance abuse problem desire illegal drugs and/or alcohol as a means of coping with life. They may resist counseling and other supports that are based on disability research.

Generic Competition
These are readily available ways in which a desire of the user may be satisfied.

Example: A person with depression receives advice from family, friends, and others concerning suicidal thoughts, rather than seeking the help of mental health professionals whose methods derive from disability research.

4 Types of Competition in Social Marketing

Service Form Competition
Service form competition. These are alternative ways in which a different type of service can satisfy a need.

Example: The parents of an adult with a developmental disability desire a supervised activity that their daughter can do during the day. They enroll her in a local traditional day program instead of the supported employment services that are based on disability research.

Enterprise Competition
These are other enterprises offering the same service form.

Example: A number of community mental health clinics, outpatient psychiatric services, private psychologists, and others, provide mental health services. Partnering with these organizations and individuals may be the best way to market research-based information, such as mental health program innovations developed through disability research.

Service Form Competition | Enterprise Competition

(A[ERIC] om Andreasen, 1995, p. 81)

Research on Employer Incentives, Job Accommodations, and Employment Training

EXAMPLE PLAN

TARGET OBJECTIVE

At business organizations and in corporate meeting rooms (*conditions*), community business organization leaders, employers—including supervisors and HR directors, and service provider supervisors will participate in informational sessions concerning research on employer incentives, job accommodations, and employment training strategies (*performance*). The informational sessions will lead to a 25 percent increase in the employment of people with disabilities at participating businesses and a similar increase in the percentage of people with disabilities who are placed in jobs by participating service providers (*criterion*).

MARKETING MIX

Product

Printed, Internet, and video materials will be developed to:
* Describe the RRTC's research activities, including a brief history;
* Provide reprints of pertinent journal articles and book chapters developed by the RRTC, as well as fact sheets and brochures about the research;
* Present examples of a variety of employment situations portraying people with disabilities working;
* Present and dispel common employer misconceptions about hiring people with disabilities;
* Describe major employer hiring and retention incentive programs, such as the Work Opportunities Tax Credit, and their benefits and impact;
* Provide examples of an array of job accommodations, including flexible scheduling, task arrangement, physical adaptations, assistive technology, and supported employment services used at job sites with people with disabilities. Also will provide economic and productivity data describing the cost-benefits of job accommodations;
* Provide information about preferred employer training practices; and
* Provide curriculum materials for service providers and business organizations to develop their own coordinated employment information programs.

Place

Informational sessions will be held at business organizations, such as Chambers of Commerce, and in meeting rooms at large corporations. Scheduling will be conducted individually with each organization or corporation according to their determination of the best times to maximize participation. Service providers will be invited to attend the sessions at the business organizations or corporate settings. This will provide exposure of the providers to employment possibilities and will facilitate their interaction with employers in business environments. All sessions will be accessible to persons with disabilities, including ASL interpretation when requested.

Price

It is anticipated that the informational sessions will reduce costs by primarily using familiar locations and by scheduling sessions at times that minimize loss of business productivity, such as after work or during lunch hours. Materials will be provided to participants free of charge. Brief evaluations after each session will give the participants opportunities to evaluate key features of the informational sessions through *direct weighting of attribute importance* (see "Using Market Research Strategies with Disability Research Results").

Promotion

Informational sessions will be promoted through:
* Distribution of flyers announcing each session;
* Distribution of fact sheets providing enough information to facilitate each potential participant's need to know more (with session and contact information);
* Brief presentations at Chambers of Commerce, other business organizations, corporations, and service providers;
* Ongoing professional interactions with community leaders, employers, service providers, and other interested persons; and
* Internet announcements and online fact sheets about the informational sessions.

EVALUATION

Business leaders, employers, and service providers who participate in the informational sessions will be surveyed at three months following their sessions to determine whether their employment of people with disabilities increased by the 25 percent criterion. The follow-up survey will include key questions about development of coordinated employment information programs at businesses and service providers, and will inquire about the participants' needs for more information or training available from the RRTC.

(Adapted from Andreasen, 1995, p. 85-86)

10

The example at left is based on sample market research using secondary market research, the researchers' visits with business leaders and employers, and focus groups composed of business leaders and employers. Market research indicated that employers are particularly interested in: (a) hiring people with disabilities due to current worker shortages; (b) the potential for receiving monetary and tax incentives for hiring and retaining people with disabilities; and (c) the use of job accommodations in training and maintaining such persons on the job. Human resource specialists were particularly interested in learning about on-the-job training strategies used in a variety of employment situations.

Marketing and NIDRR-funded Research

This issue of *The Research Exchange* includes a brief review of the D&U process, and introduces the marketing concept and social marketing in relation to dissemination and utilization. Understanding how marketing can strengthen dissemination activities should dispel notions that marketing is only useful in advertising and sales of consumer products. The purpose of marketing, as applied to the D&U of disability research, is to make information from research outcomes available and utilized by an array of users with varying needs and backgrounds.

To ensure maximum utilization, researchers should involve targeted potential users in as many phases of the research process as is feasible. It may not be possible to extensively involve users in the preparation of a NIDRR grant proposal due to brief turn-around times from the initial "Request for Proposals" and associated due date. However, users can be involved in market research on the final design and conduct of the research study. For research studies that are in progress, users can participate in market research on the development of the dissemination strategy. All NIDRR grantees, from fellowships to large research and training centers, with research topics ranging from vocational rehabilitation to computer applications, can utilize elements from the marketing concept and market research to enhance their D&U activities and outcomes.

NIDRR Grantees' Q & A about Marketing

The National Center for the Dissemination of Disability Research (NCDDR) surveyed approximately 300 NIDRR-funded projects in 1998-99 about their dissemination practices. One question asked was: "Do you perceive a need for technical assistance on planning or implementing outreach strategies, and if so, in what areas?" In responding to this question, many grantees identified a need for information or technical assistance in the general areas of 'marketing disability research results' and 'reaching specific target audiences.'

In late 1999, the NCDDR conducted an informal follow-up email survey with 42 grantees who previously mentioned an interest in the area of marketing. Grantees were asked to submit specific questions concerning (a) the marketing concept; (b) market research; and (c) marketing strategies. Questions in one or more of these areas were received from 21 grantees. Following are the questions related to the marketing concept and basic ideas around market research, and responses.

The Marketing Concept

Q: *What is "the marketing concept?" Is that different than identifying target audiences for publications and informing them of availability?*
A: The marketing concept includes identifying target audiences and informing them of availability (promotion). However, marketing extends beyond these activities to include the participation of users in all phases of a research study and dissemination of research results. It provides a systematic means of developing research information or research-based products that address the needs and concerns of users from the conception of the research to its dissemination and utilization.

Q: *In keeping with grant requirements, how can a grantee clearly distinguish between (and record) information dissemination and marketing efforts?*
A: In this issue of *The Research Exchange*, marketing is presented as a field that is complementary to effective dissemination of research information. Marketing is not a separate or opposing concept, but provides a clear connection with dissemination and utilization (D&U), and brings an array of market research techniques and marketing strategies into use in D&U activities. Unfortunately, marketing often has been narrowly defined as advertising and

selling products. In the context of NIDRR-funded research, it is appropriate that marketing and D&U serve to facilitate the users' acceptance and utilization of research information, and not be conceptually applied to advertising the sale of products developed with federal funds. See also: A Special Note Concerning Advertising and Public Relations Costs.

Q: How can we more efficiently identify ways to market to the general community? How can we promote our research and educate the general public as to its benefits?
A: It appears that these questions are analogous to a production orientation where D&U occurs in a one-way fashion, from researcher to user. However, the goal of marketing is to involve users in the design, development, and dissemination of research outcomes. It is important that the researcher work with the general community/public to obtain the market information necessary to effectively and efficiently disseminate the research information in ways that ensure utilization in the community.

Q: How can the disparate disability information outlets work better together to get the information to the parties who would benefit?
A: It may be beneficial for researchers and other information sources to jointly identify their "competition," as described in this issue. Most likely grantees will discover that they are not each other's primary competition. By identifying competitive barriers, information sources will find common areas to address in disseminating research information. By forming partnerships, they can cooperatively conduct market research and develop D&U strategies that can target broader user audiences.

Q: Would the manner in which the marketing concept is applied to NIDRR research differ depending on the type of research being conducted?
A: Yes, marketing and D&U need to be individualized for each research study, package of research information, and user group. It is likely that development of a researcher's overall strategy for disseminating research information may take some initial time and effort working ...sers to identify ways to address

dissemination. After an overall D&U strategy is developed, individualized market research and dissemination activities for each research project may follow variations of the overall strategy.

Q: Dissemination of our program models and research findings is an integral part of our work. Should we routinely allocate funds for marketing purposes?
A: A budget for D&U should be considered for each proposal, allocated to areas such as supplies, travel, and personnel in addition to printing and distribution. As a part of the overall dissemination plan, marketing requires the development of distinct strategies to respond to the marketing mix/D&U components for each research project and user group. Working with users to determine their information and support needs will help define budget needs for D&U activities.

Market Research Overview

Q: How can we better understand the needs of our "customers" and how can we be most assured that the information is reaching the right audience(s)?
A: This issue of The Research Exchange provides an overview of market research techniques that fall under exploratory and confirmatory market research strategies. Market research can help researchers explore their users' needs and confirm that users are receiving, accepting, and utilizing the research information to increase their awareness and change their behavior.

Q: We want ideas on how we can get "outside" the normal rehabilitation networks. We have heard from too many people, including our project officer, that "people do not know about your RRTC's mission and work." So, how can we identify the "untapped" audience?
A: Market research can help to identify potential users by obtaining information about additional users through user visits or focus groups. Secondary market research also may provide information about potential user groups beyond those in the researcher's immediate area or beyond the disabilities that the researcher has focused on. Web sites of NIDRR grantees and other researchers may provide useful secondary data and links to additional user groups.

Q: We need good useful info that we can market on the state level. Some data is good but outcome/impact data or information is more useful when advocating for policy changes.
A: Please check out possible sources for secondary market research data presented elsewhere in this issue: Using Market Research Strategies with Disability Research Results. These include governmental databases as well as information provided by several NIDRR grantees.

Q: How do you balance the cost of print copies of research results in paper format against putting something on the Web which can be essentially downloaded for free? What marketing research information does NCDRR have related to the use of the Internet by human service programs and how they attract Web users?
A: Making research-based information available on the World Wide Web can also be a great cost-saving way of sharing that information. The preparation of electronic files that will be available at any time costs much less than typical expenses for camera-ready hard copy and resulting printing, storage, and postage costs, in addition to staff resources needed for accounting and shipping activities.

Secondary market research information about the format preferences of consumers with disabilities and other stakeholders is available in The Research Exchange, Volume 2, Number 4 (1997); and Volume 3, Number 2 (1998). This information is based on 1997 surveys indicating that 27 percent of consumers and 26 percent of stakeholders accessed information online. While it is likely that these percentages will increase, there is a continued need to provide users with print and alternate formats (such as video, audio, Braille). Sending print and using a variety of media ensures that users receive information they may not locate on the World Wide Web. The use of market research can help determine the media and format needs of users and assist in designing materials and online resources that increase utilization of research information. It is also important to note that users look for information when they have a need for it. So, considering ways to archive your information for easy access at a later date is very important.

Using Market Research Strategies with Disability Research Results

NIDRR-funded researchers demonstrate high standards of innovation and scholarship in their research. Grantees can ensure that their research-based information influences the awareness and behavior of targeted users by developing an ongoing knowledge of their needs, desires, and ideas. *Market research* is an important tool for understanding the characteristics of target market(s) and for designing dissemination strategies that reflect those characteristics. Although some market research techniques may require additional resources, other techniques can be adapted and used by researchers to improve the dissemination and, ultimately, the utilization of their research information.

Market research is defined as "the function that links the...customer...to the marketer through information— information used to identify and define marketing opportunities and problems; generate, refine, and evaluate marketing actions; monitor marketing performance; and improve understanding of marketing as a process" (American Marketing Association, 1999). While business market research may focus on selling a tangible product, market research on the dissemination and utilization (D&U) of disability research looks for changes in user awareness and behavior, including development of new policies or services and utilization of new interventions or inventions.

Exploratory and Confirmatory Market Research

The goal of exploratory market research is *discovery*. The underlying questions are, What is new? and What are we missing? The goal of confirmatory techniques is *resolution:* Is this the right choice? What results can we expect? You conduct exploratory market research to open your eyes and broaden your vision. You conduct confirmatory research to narrow your options and concentrate your efforts along the optimal path. (McQuarrie 1996, p. 7).

Exploratory and confirmatory market research techniques are used at different stages in a research project's *decision cycle* (Table 1). The decision cycle calls for sequential market research activities and questions as the research design and D&U strategy are developed and implemented. Each activity requires different market research techniques as the researcher's informational needs change from initial exploratory information (*Scan the Environment*) to final confirmatory information (*Evaluate Success*). The four decision cycle activities in Table 1 are further described in relation to each activity's objectives and suggested market research techniques.

Table 1:

Four Decision Cycle Activities

	Activity/Questions	Objectives	Techniques
Scan the Environment	How are we doing? What's going on?	Identify, describe, monitor	Main: Secondary research, user visits Supporting: Focus groups, surveys
Generate Options	What are the possibilities?	Generate, define, explore	Main: User visits, focus groups Supporting: Secondary research
Select an Option	What is the explanation? Which option is best?	Evaluate, test, select, prioritize	Main: Experiments, surveys, choice models, usability tests Supporting: Secondary research
Evaluate Success	What will we achieve? How are we doing?	Measure, track, assess	Main: Surveys, secondary research Supporting: user visits

Using Market Research Strategies,
continued from page 11

Following is an overview of market research techniques with suggestions for adaptations by NIDRR grantees. These techniques fall under the categories of exploratory and confirmatory market research and include secondary market research, user visits, focus groups, experiments, choice modeling, usability testing, and surveys.

Secondary Market Research

Grantees may use secondary market research to identify potential user groups, describe their characteristics, and identify and monitor competing activities or barriers. "Secondary market research refers to any data gathering for one purpose and by one party and then put to a second use by or made to serve the purpose of a second party" (McQuarrie, 1996, p. 39). Although secondary market research may not meet the standards of primary research, it can provide the researcher with preliminary information that serves as a base for further inquiry.

For example, several NIDRR-funded projects present data on the employment status of people with work disabilities. These data include disability statistics and demographics for those persons who are employed and those not employed. Another source, the Social Security Administration Statistical Tables, provides data on the number of people with work disabilities who receive financial assistance through the Social Security Administration (SSA) in the form of Supplemental Security Income (SSI) and Social Security Disability Income (SSDI). Analyses of these combined secondary data provide information about the impact of federal financial assistance as a possible barrier to the employment of some people with work disabilities. This secondary market research data may illustrate the need for a D&U strategy that addresses users' concerns about losing their federal assistance while promoting the advantages of employment.

The expansion of the Internet and World Wide Web has simplified the acquisition and analysis of data for use in secondary market research, with information readily available at little or no cost. Following is a brief list of several NIDRR-funded projects that provide openly accessible nationwide statistics and/or information databases through their Web sites. Each project is listed by project name, type and availability of information, L on the World Wide Web.

ABLEDATA Database
Database of assistive technology products, reports on products, online

<http://www.abledata.com/>

Disability Statistics Rehabilitation Research and Training Center
Abstracts and reports, covering a wide range of disability statistics, online

<http://dsc.ucsf.edu/>

Improving Access to Disability Data
Chartbooks, statistical charts, tables and surveys, online and PDF

<http://www.infouse.com/disabilitydata/>

Model Spinal Cord Injury Systems National Spinal Cord Injury Statistical Center
Spinal cord injury database, acute, rehabilitation and follow-up (viz. annual, long-term post-discharge) data on SCI patients who received care in the "System" following injury

<http://www.ncddr.org/mscis/nscisc.html>

National Center for the Dissemination of Disability Research
Survey statistics on grantees and users in The Research Exchange, online

<http://www.ncddr.org/researchexchange/>

National Rehabilitation Information Center
Directory of NIDRR-funded projects, Compendium of grantee-produced products including statistical resources, REHABDATA, online

<http://www.naric.com/>

NIDRR Traumatic Brain Injury Model Systems National Database
Database, analyses, articles, online and PDF

<http://www.tbims.org/database.html>

Several secondary data sources, sponsored by the federal government, provide information pertaining to disability issues or include disability data with general population data:

- **Centers for Disease Control and Prevention:**
  <http://www.cdc.gov/>

- **Federal Interagency Council on Statistical Policy (FedStats):**
  <http://www.fedstats.gov/>

- **National Center for Educational Statistics:**
  <http://nces.ed.gov/>

- **Social Security Administration Statistical Tables:**
  <http://www.ssa.gov/OACT/STATS/statTab.html>

- **U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics:**
  <http://stats.bls.gov/datahome.htm>

- **U.S. Census Bureau:**
  <http://www.census.gov/>

- **U.S. Department of Health and Human Services:**
  <http://www.dhhs.gov/>

- **U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission:**
  <http://www.eeoc.gov/index.html>

Secondary market research is particularly useful during the environmental scanning stage of the decision cycle (Table 1). It is usually quicker and less costly to find answers to questions using secondary data than by conducting market research studies. According to Blankenship, Breen, and Dutka (1998):

> ...collecting data for marketing purposes has a basic rule: Never collect your own data (primary data) if the material has already been collected by someone else (secondary data). Doing your own thing in marketing research if you don't have to is not only like reinventing the wheel, but also expensive and time-consuming. So you always start by examining the secondary sources (p. 15-16).

User Visits

"Good social marketers begin by saying: 'I need to know everything I can about those whom I am supposed to influence'" (Andreasen, 1995, p. 76). This suggests that researchers should talk with targeted users in the environments where they provide or receive services, or where they live and work. Visits seek to elicit user's comments, pro or con, about the proposed activity without bias toward the researcher's point of view. Researchers should learn what users "fear and what they don't understand, what they want and hope for, what they listen to, and whom they respect" (Andreasen, 1995, p. 77).

User visits are conducted in a cordial and informal fashion, and should include individualized variations of carefully developed questions and comment-provoking statements to gather consistent information across the number of users visited. Researchers should visit with a representative cross-section of users to gain multiple perspectives, for example, with managers, direct service workers, and people with disabilities in a community living arrangement (CLA). However, responses of users in a particular setting may be unique and not necessarily representative of similar settings.

User visits add the perspectives of individual users to information from secondary market research and may promote ideas for further inquiry using other market research techniques. Information from user visits can help researchers configure their research-based information by gaining insight about users' *content/media* preferences and the *place/context* where they receive and interpret research-based information.
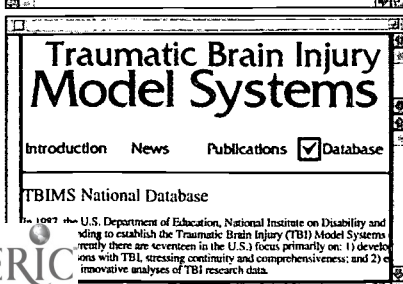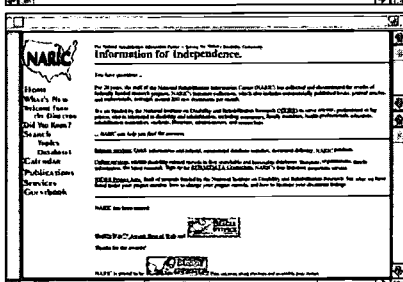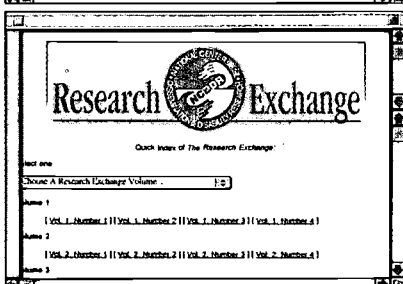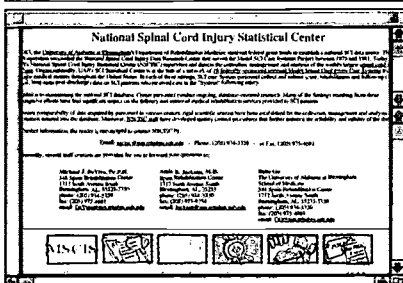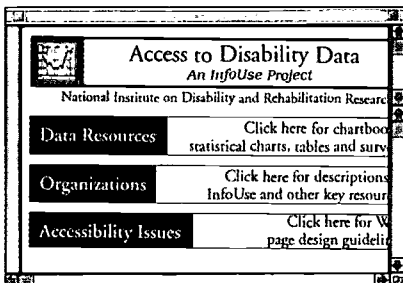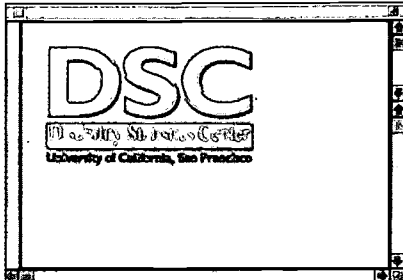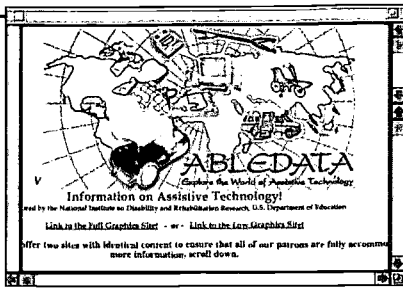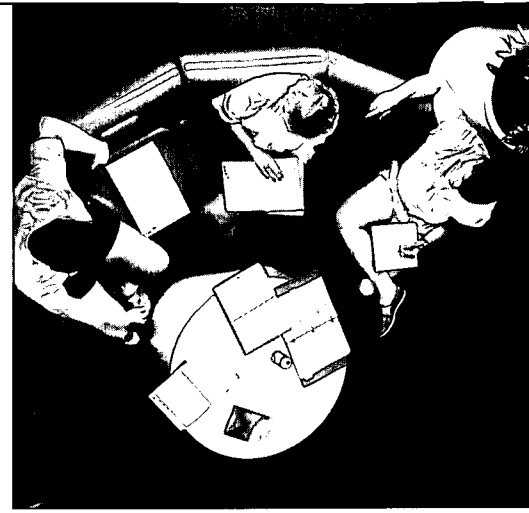
Focus Groups

Focus groups are a qualitative market research technique that is best used when the goal is to explore a particular research problem or dissemination strategy. Focus groups also may be used to generate research or dissemination options either before or during the initial phase of a research study or dissemination activity.

Focus groups are small groups of carefully selected people, brought together to discuss a topic that is defined and presented by a group moderator. Focus groups can help grantees obtain the perspectives and creative ideas of users, gain valuable information about additional user groups, and explore ideas for the development, conduct, and dissemination of a research study. Unlike the individual perspectives acquired in user visits, focus groups provide the researcher with more extensive information through the give and take of group discussions.

A focus group is typically composed of six to twelve people who share common relevant characteristics or interests, such as a focus group of people with disabilities, another of program managers, or a focus group of parents of people with disabilities. The focus group moderator should be a person who is adept at stimulating group interaction and familiar with the researcher's questions. Combining a focus group with common characteristics or interests with a skilled moderator facilitates the group's concentration on the topic and their open discussion of the researcher's questions (American Statistical Association, 1998).

Experiments

Experiments also are intended for use in option selection. In fact, their design corresponds exactly to the structure of many business decisions: that is, which of these options is best? (McQuarrie, 1996, p. 33-34).

Market research experiments are particularly suitable for NIDRR-funded researchers who have extensive training and experience in social science research. Experiments might include the testing of various dissemination strategies or materials to compare their effectiveness. For example, an experiment can compare users' perceptions about the usefulness of informal materials, including fact sheets and implementation guides, with more formal research reports and journal articles.

Marketing and D&U Resources

- American Marketing Association. <http://www.ama.org/>

- American Statistical Association. <http://www.amstat.org/>

- Andreasen, Alan R. *Marketing social change*. Jossey-Bass Publishers. <http://www.JosseyBass.com/catalog/isbn/0-7879-0137-7/>

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- National Center for the Dissemination of Disability Research (NCDDR). *Improving the links between research and practice: Approaches to the effective dissemination of disability research. Guide to improving practice, number one.* <http://www.ncddr.org/du/guide1.html>

- National Center for the Dissemination of Disability Research (NCDDR). *Improving the usefulness of disability research: A toolbox of dissemination strategies. Guide to improving practice, number two.* <http://www.ncddr.org/du/guide2.html>

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- Weinreich, N.K. Social marketing Web site: <http://www.social-marketing.com/>   16

- brook, John D. & Boethel, Martha. *The dissemination and utilization of disability research: National Center for the Dissemination of Disability Research approach.* <http://www.ncddr.org/du/ncddrapproach.html>

Choice Modeling

Any procedure that attempts to analyze how different factors combine to influence the choice of one product over another can be considered a kind of choice modeling (McQuarrie, 1996, p.101).

Researchers may use choice modeling to analyze individual attributes of a product, including research-based information, to choose and develop attributes that best meet the needs of users. The most applicable choice modeling strategy for NIDRR-funded researchers is *direct weighting of attribute importance* which analyzes a product by asking users to estimate the importance, or the weight, of the product's key features, perhaps with a Likert scale. In the example of a social marketing D&U strategy, the RRTC on Workplace Supports plan to evaluate each informational session using a brief questionnaire which asks participants to rate the perceived value of key features of the session (see: Adapting the Marketing Concept to the Dissemination and Utilization of Disability Research).

Direct attribute weighting is useful in situations where the researcher wants to sort through possible improvements to the existing *content* and *media* of their research-based information so it will have the most impact on targeted users. As with similar sampling procedures, the characteristics of the sample, and bias in the attributes selected and questions asked, affect the validity of the information obtained by choice modeling.

Usability Testing

"Usability studies provide a way to test whether your model is correct by observing what happens when users actually attempt to use your product" (McQuarrie, 1996, p. 132). Usability testing is a powerful tool for directly analyzing research outcomes before they are disseminated. Grantees may benefit from usability testing by observing and recording how a sample of users interact with a prototype product or draft of research-based information. For example, a researcher provides a prototype of a new research-based assistive communication device, and a draft manual for

its use, to a group of targeted potential users. Users can be videotaped, or data can be collected, during their first few tries at using the communication device. The users can provide comments about the device's ease of use during pilot testing and, after testing, respond to questions concerning whether they would use the device if it were available.

Usability testing can be performed with people who are resistant users or potential non-users, including people with competing self-interests, beliefs, or behaviors. Testing the usability of research-based information with this type of user can provide ideas about how to configure it for other similar users.

Surveys

Surveys have traditionally been the main-stay of market research—a fixed set of questions are asked of a large, carefully selected, sample of users. Surveys may play a supporting role in scanning the environment (Table 1) in cases where quantitative data are necessary. However, "surveys are a confirmatory tool whose proper purpose is to limit, narrow, and specify; hence, this tool is largely incapable of expanding, broadening, and reconfiguring your understanding" (McQuarrie, 1996, p. 32). This is apparent in objective surveys that do not encourage users to add information or expand on their replies. Although surveys may be more costly, they are an effective market research technique for grantees who wish to confirm and analyze the utilization of research-based information when secondary market research data are not available.

Using Market Research Techniques with NIDRR-Funded Research

Researchers may determine at an early point in the decision cycle whether precise descriptive market data are needed. If so, a review of secondary research data may find valuable information. Qualitative information about the users' interests and their creative ideas can be obtained through other exploratory market research techniques, such as user visits and focus groups. Market research

techniques that help in generating and selecting dissemination options, such as experiments or choice modeling, may be used as D&U strategies are developed and implemented. The decision cycle should culminate in quality measures that confirm utilization of the research-based information.

Not all of the market research techniques will be appropriate for each research study. Rather, researchers should determine which techniques to use by developing their own market research questions based on those presented in Table 1. Grantees may creatively adapt the techniques according to their time and funding constraints, and, if necessary, apply their adaptations with readily available users and user groups. The end result of market research should not be strict adherence to its processes, but valid measures of dissemination outcomes in the form of user awareness and behavior change.

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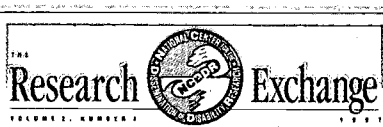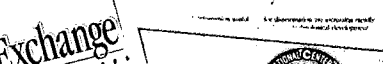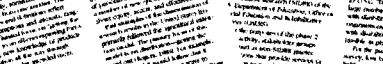
New and Returning Features

SOMETHING NEW

This first issue of the new cycle of *The Research Exchange* presents a new feature: **Who's in the News?**

With each issue, we will share some of the stories about NIDRR grantees and their research that have appeared in national media sources. NCDDR staff members will talk with grantees and media representatives about the origin and evolution of the stories, and their interactions with media representatives.

Sharing this may be helpful to other grantees who would like to establish relationships with journalists and work with them to make information about their research available to the public. Details will be provided about where and when the information was presented, and how interested parties can get a copy. ,

The following criteria were identified to determine if a news item should be shared via *The Research Exchange*. [NOTE: Formal published research results or research-based articles in professional journals are not categorized here as news items.]

Criteria for inclusion in Who's in the News?

- Story must have appeared in a nationally circulated disability media source, excluding newsletters and other media published by NIDRR grantees
- Story must have appeared in a major newspaper with potential for national distribution
- Broadcast must have been on a national TV or radio source
- Story must have been published as a news item by a national professional organization, with national distribution
- Story must highlight activities or results of research acknowledging funding through NIDRR.

An item that does not fit any of these criteria can be discussed with NCDDR staff to determine if it is appropriate for *Who's in the News*.

Who's in the News

Four news items are presented in this issue

- The **Washington Post**
- The **New York Times**
- The **APA Monitor**, newsletter of the American Psychological Association
- **National Public Radio** segment

On October 5, 1999 the **Washington Post** published an article entitled *Agency Leads the Battle for Disabled Parents*. The article presents the story of how Dr. Megan Kirshbaum, Director of the NIDRR-sponsored National Resource Center for Parents with Disabilities at Through the Looking Glass in Berkeley, CA, started the agency and describes one of her first cases in advocating for the rights of parents with disabilities. It also covers current activities at the National Resource Center for Parents with Disabilities.

The article was written by **Mr. Jay Mathews**, Washington Post Staff Writer, who initially developed an interest in Through the Looking Glass during his media coverage of the Tiffany Callo case. He subsequently interviewed Kirshbaum for his book, **A Mother's Touch: The Tiffany Callo Story** (1992) which details the efforts of a young mother with a disability and Through the Looking Glass in battling the courts for custody of her infant son. The Washington Post story was initiated by a press release that was disseminated by the National Resource Center for Parents with Disabilities in 1997. There was extensive interviewing and exchange of material between Matthews and the Center staff, and the article was pending for a year before final publication.

Dr. Paul Preston, the Center's Co-Director, indicated that the Post article stimulated other newspapers including their local paper, the **Oakland Tribune**, to work with them on an upcoming article about the Center. For further information, call Dr. Paul Preston at 510-848-1112, ext.104, or email: **<paul_preston@lookingglass.org>**

SOMETHING OLD

A popular and requested feature of *The Research Exchange* during the NCDDR's pilot phase (1995-1999) was **NIDRR Grantees and Staff Receive Recognition.**

The items presented in *The Research Exchange* demonstrated the wide variety and prestige of special awards made to staff members of NIDRR-funded projects across the country. Ninety-nine individuals and 14 projects reported a special recognition that was included in a separate document spanning Vol. 1, No. 2 through Vol. 4, No. 4.

The NCDDR will continue to solicit and collect this type of information to highlight in *The Research Exchange*. The recognition should be related to an individual's work in NIDRR-funded research activities. The following criteria were identified to determine if a recognition item should be shared via The Research Exchange. [NOTE: Awards of new funding are not included.]

Criteria for inclusion in NIDRR Grantees and Staff Receive Recognition

- Recognition by a national professional, consumer, or service organization
- Recognition by an institution of higher education (*not department/school*)
- Recognition by a service provider
- Outstanding paper/presentation/research award
- Election to major office in professional, consumer, or service organization
- Citation by governmental entity
- Distinguished Fellowship (*non-NIDRR*)
- Participation in national panel/committee/board

An item that does not fit one of these criteria can be discussed with NCDDR staff to determine if it is appropriate for *NIDRR Grantees and Staff Receive Recognition*.

An online version of the Washington Post article is available at: <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wpsrv/health/daily/oct99/disabled5.htm>.

The **New York Times** published an article entitled *Tight Labor Supply Creates Jobs for the Mentally Disabled* on November 11, 1999. The article includes a quote from Dr. Charles Lakin, Director of the Research and Training Center on Community Living at the University of Minnesota, "There has been incredible growth in the number of people with intellectual disabilities going to work for pay. We've gone from just getting a job for these people to sitting down and asking them about their career aspirations."

The article was written by **Mr. Dirk Johnson**, staff writer at the Times' Chicago office. Mr. Johnson had been referred to Dr. Lakin by the Arc-U.S. According to Dr. Lakin, "I found Mr. Johnson to be a good guy—eager to contribute to spreading the word about employees with developmental disabilities. He seemed pleased to plug issues of importance, most notably the Work Incentives Bill which was to be voted on at the end of the week in which the article appeared."

The *Times* article stimulated development of a similar article by **Ms. Kay Miller**, at the **Minneapolis Star Tribune**, entitled *Companies Welcome the Developmental Disabled*, published in the November 22, 1999 issue. This article also quoted Dr. Lakin: "It also is part of a larger national trend in which tight labor markets- an unemployment rate at 4.1 percent nationally and 2.5 percent in Minnesota- have forced companies to look beyond the traditional labor pool." For further information, call Dr. Mary Hayden, Research Director, at 612-624-5005 or email: **<hayde001@umn.edu>**

An online version of the New York Times article is available at: <http://www.nytimes.com/auth/login?Tag=/&URI=/99/11/15/news/national/worker-shortage.html>

A 60-minute segment on the topic of *Mentally Ill Voters* appeared on **National Public Radio's Talk of the Nation**, October 25, 1999. Among the participants was Dr. Kay Schriner, Director of "The Empowerment Project: Promoting Equality for People with Disabilities through Electoral Participation" at the University of Arkansas. The show's host, **Melinda Penkava**, introduced Dr. Schriner as "the Director of a research project funded by the National Institute on Disability and Rehabilitation Research." On the program, Dr Schriner stated that voter registration "not only empowers the individual themselves, but it also empowers the democratic process." For further information, contact Dr. Schriner at 501-575-6417 or email: **<kays@comp.uark.edu>**

A RealAudio version of the October 25, 1999 broadcast is available at: <http://search.npr.org/cf/cmn/cmnpd01fm.cfm?PrgDate=10/25/1999&PrgID=5>

NIDRR staff have been working with the American Psychological Association (APA) to have psychologists who are NIDRR grantees provide research information to APA publications. Dr. Constance Pledger of NIDRR has established an ongoing relationship between NIDRR and the APA during the past two years. This relationship has included multiple meetings between the leadership of the APA and Dr. Katherine Seelman, NIDRR Director. As a result, several NIDRR grantees were featured in three articles in the November 1999 edition of the **APA Monitor**, a national monthly newsletter sent to over 150,000 psychologists. *[NOTE: Effective January 2000, the publication was converted to a four-color news magazine, Monitor on Psychology.]*

The November 1999 *APA Monitor* included an article entitled *Knocking Down Societal Barriers for People with Disabilities*, by **Lisa Rabasca**, Monitor staff, that discussed community living issues, employment, coordinated services, and personal assistance services for persons with disabilities. The article featured quotes and information provided by: Dr. John D. Corrigan,

Principal Investigator at the Ohio Regional Traumatic Brain Injury Model System, Ohio State University; Dr. Susanne Bruyére, Principal Investigator at the RRTC for Economic Research on Employment Policy for Persons with Disabilities, Cornell University; and Dr. Kristofer Hagglund, Principal Investigator at the Missouri Model Spinal Cord Injury System, University of Missouri.

The *Monitor* article *Guidelines for Spinal Cord Injuries Don't Go Far Enough*, also by **Lisa Rabasca**, featured a review of new clinical practice guidelines by Dr. Timothy Elliott, Project Director at the RRTC on Secondary Conditions of Spinal Cord Injury, University of Alabama at Birmingham.

The third article entitled Public Interest: *Environment Now Key to Disability Research*, by **Joe Volz**, Monitor staff, examines the environmental causes and ramifications of injury and disability. This article included extensive information and quotes from: Dr. Mitchell Rosenthal, Project Director at the Northern New Jersey Traumatic Brain Injury System, Kessler Medical Rehabilitation Research and Education Corporation in West Orange, New Jersey; Dr. David Patterson, Co-Principal Investigator at the University of Washington Burn Injury Rehabilitation Model System; Dr. Richard Melia from NIDRR; and Dr. Kristofer Hagglund, Missouri Model Spinal Cord Injury System.

Dr. Rosenthal and Dr. Pledger were instrumental in working with APA staff to develop and publish the November articles and are working with Dr. Seelman to develop articles for an upcoming issue of **American Psychologist**.

For further information call Dr. Mitchell Rosenthal at 973-731-3600, email: **<tbi@kmrrec.org>** or Dr. Constance Pledger at 202-205-4352, email: **<connie_pledger@ed.gov>**

The articles are available in the online version of the November 1999 **APA Monitor** at: <http://www.apa.org/monitor/nov99/>.

Kristofer J. Hagglund, Ph.D., Principal Investigator of the **Missouri Model Spinal Cord Injury System (MOMSCIS)**, was recognized as a *Diplomate in Rehabilitation Psychology* by the American Board of Professional Psychology in July, 1999. This recognition is awarded to those individuals demonstrating expertise in this field. To date, there are fewer than 100 Diplomates in Rehabilitation Psychology in the United States. Dr. Hagglund was also notified at the 107th American Psychological Association (APA) Annual Convention, August 20-24, 1999, that he has been named a Fellow in the APA.

Dr. Hagglund is Associate Professor of Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation, School of Medicine, University of Missouri-Columbia and is one of only three Board Certified rehabilitation psychologists in the state. He also serves as Co-Investigator of the **Missouri Arthritis Rehabilitation Research and Training Center (MARRTC)**. For more information, contact Dr. Hagglund at <hagglundk@health.missouri.edu>.

See: <http://www.muhealth.org/~arthritis/hagglund_spotlight.html>

John Hewett, Professor of statistics and biostatistician with the **Missouri Arthritis RRTC (MARRTC)**, received the *Distinguished Scholar Award* from the Association of Rheumatology Health Professionals (ARHP), a division of the American College of Rheumatology (ACR). Dr. Hewett was honored for his 20-year commitment to rheumatology at the ACR/ARHP annual meeting in Boston on Nov. 15, 1999. ARHP Distinguished Scholars must demonstrate exceptional academic achievement in the rheumatic diseases, said Kelly Sheahan, communications director for the ACR.

See: <http://www.muhealth.org/~arthritis/spotlight/hewett.html>

Marilyn K. Sanford, Ph.D., P.T., Co-Investigator and Principal Investigator for **MARRTC**, received the *Outstanding Service to the Profession Award* from the American Physical Therapy Association's Missouri Chapter at the organization's conference in April, 1999. Sanford's service includes the Chapter's presidency for three years, Chief Delegate for the Missouri Chapter for five years, Treasurer for the Central District, and serving on the fiscal oversight committee. Sanford is a Clinical Associate Professor and Chair of the University of Missouri-Columbia's Department of Physical Therapy within the School of Health Related Professions. For more information, contact **Dr. Sanford** at <sanfordm@health.missouri.edu>

The Web site of the **Missouri Arthritis RRTC** (MARRTC) has received several awards. Medinex.com gave its *Medinex Seal of Approval* in the spring of 1999. Medinex.com indexes and briefly describes the site for their specialized health-care search engine. Medinex states that its goal is to create the most complete and trusted health-related community on the Internet. In giving the Seal, Medinex.com stated, "Since there are no rules on who can publish what on the Internet, we have adopted a set of standards that will add credibility to our Web site and yours."

See: <http://www.muhealth.org/~arthritis/whatsnew/medinex.html>

MARRTC's Web site was also a winner of the *Editor's Choice Award* from HealingWell.com in July, 1999. "The award is given to selected health Web sites that exhibit exceptional Web design, reliable and quality health information on disease and disorder topics, plus accessibility," stated Peter Waite, editor of HealingWell.com - Guide to Diseases, Disorders and Chronic Illness. HealingWell.com describes itself as an online health resource guide to medical news, articles and information, newsgroups and message boards, books, disease-related Web sites, medical directories and search engines for patients, friends, and family coping with disabling diseases, disorders, or chronic illness.

See: <http://www.muhealth.org/~arthritis/whatsnew/healingwell.html>

In September, 1999, the MARRTC Web site was featured by StudyWeb as one of the best educational resources on the Web. MARRTC's site is listed in the Medicine: Arthritis section. StudyWeb describes itself as one of the Internet's premier sites for educational resources for students and teachers.

See: <http://www.muhealth.org/~arthritis/whatsnew/studyweb.html>

For more information, contact **Dianna Borsi O'Brien**, MARRTC Senior Information Specialist, at **573-882-2914**.

Beneficial Designs, Inc. of Santa Cruz, CA has won a *Tibbetts Award* from the Small Business Administration. NIDRR's Small Business Innovative Research (SBIR) program has funded Beneficial Designs, Inc. for the **Trails Web Site with Universal Access Information** project. The *Tibbetts Award* is named after Roland Tibbetts, founder of the SBIR Program. In 1999, 57 companies and/or individuals were selected to receive this award in recognition of their unique contributions as an "SBIR Model of Excellence." Beneficial Designs, Inc. is owned by **Peter Axelson**, who is an individual with a disability. For more information, contact Beneficial Designs, Inc. at **831-429-8447** or <mail@beneficialdesigns.com>

Erick Ong, postgraduate researcher with the **RRTC in Neuromuscular Diseases** (RRTC/NMD) at UC Davis, was honored with the *Best Scientific Poster Award* for his work, "Energy Cost of Locomotion in Boys with Duchenne Muscular Dystrophy Measured with a Portable Metabolic Cart." The poster and award were presented at the American Academy of Cerebral Palsy and Developmental Medicine (AACPDM) 53rd Annual Meeting in Washington D.C., September 14-17, 1999.

Ong is a NIDRR trainee working with faculty mentor and RRTC/NMD Principal Investigator **Craig McDonald**, MD, Associate Professor in the Department of Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation. Co-authors on the poster included **Dr. McDonald**, NIDRR trainees **Denise Walsh** and **Lana Widman**, and RRTC/NMD Research Associate **Sandra Walsh**. For more information about this study, please contact **Dr. McDonald** <cmmcdonald@ucdavis.edu> or **Dr. Kathryn Devereaux**, Director of Training and Information Services for the RRTC/NMD, at **(530) 752-9270**.

NIDRR Director, **Katherine D. Seelman**, Ph.D., was the recipient of the American Public Health Association's (APHA) *1999 Disability Achievement Award*, sponsored by the APHA's DisAbility Forum. It was presented at the 127th annual meeting of the APHA, held in Chicago in November, 1999. With a long list of accomplishments to her credit, **Dr. Seelman** was selected as this year's recipient as a model for her ability to inspire. For more information, contact **David Keer** <David_Keer@ed.gov>.

Dr. Seelman was also named as the 1999 recipient of the *Outstanding Public Service Award* from the Association of Academic Physiatrists (AAP). This award is given to a non-AAP member whose outstanding public service has significantly contributed to the field of Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation. Dr. Seelman was recognized for her "long term efforts in promoting coordination and cooperation among Federal agencies supporting rehabilitation research." The ▬▬ was presented at the Opening

Plenary Session on March 2, of the AAP Education Conference held in San Diego, March 1-4, 2000. For more information, contact **Ellen Blasiotti** <Ellen_Blasiotti@ed.gov>.

Dr. William Kiernan, Director of the **RRTC on State Systems and Employment** at the Institute for Community Inclusion, Children's Hospital, Boston, was honored with the *1999 Michael W. Muther Award*. Governor A. Paul Celucci presented the award on behalf of the Massachusetts Governor's Commission on Employment of People with Disabilities. The *Award* is named for Michael W. Muther, the Chair of the Commission from 1976 to 1996, whose exceptional leadership reflected the force of his personality, his integrity, his commitment, his kindness and his warm sense of humor. **Dr. Keirnan** was recognized for his lifelong professional and personal commitment to expanding employment opportunities for people with severe disabilities. From 1987 to 1991, he served with Michael Muther as Co-Chair of the Governor's Commission. For further information, contact **Dr. Keirnan at** <kiernanw@a1.tch.harvard.edu> or **(617) 355-6506**.

How To Contact The National Center For The Dissemination Of Disability Research

☎

Call Us
1-800-266-1832 or 512-476-6861 V/TT
8 A.M.–NOON and 1 P.M.–5 P.M. C.T.
Mon.–Fri.
(except holidays) or record
a message 24 hr./day

Explore Our Web Site
http://www.ncddr.org/

E-mail Us
admin@ncddr.org

Write Us
National Center for the
Dissemination of Disability Research
Southwest Educational Development
Laboratory
211 East Seventh Street, Suite 400
Austin, Texas 78701-3281

Visit Us
In downtown Austin, Texas 4th floor,
Southwest Tower, Brazos at 7th St.
8 A.M.–NOON and 1 P.M.–5 P.M. C.T.
Mon.–Fri. (except holidays)

Fax Us
512-476-2286

An electronic version of *The Research Exchange*, Vol. 5, No. 1 is available on the Internet at URL <http://www.ncddr.org/researchexchange/>
The Research Exchange is available in alternate formats upon request.

This newsletter is
available in alternate
formats upon request.

SEDL
Southwest Educational
Development Laboratory

NIDRR
National Institute on Disability
and Rehabilitation Research

Using Market Research for the Dissemination and Utilization of Disability Research

Listening to users is the key to successful marketing. The goal of market research, as is the case with virtually any research, is to provide information for decision making. Marketers turn to market research when they need information about their customers' attitudes and behavior toward their organization and its products. This information can serve to conduct marketing planning, problem solving or monitoring.

Researchers funded by the National Institute on Disability and Rehabilitation Research (NIDRR) can use market research strategies to learn more about the needs, concerns, and ideas of potential users of disability research results. Effective market research can: (a) identify appropriate target users and groups; (b) ensure that research activities are pertinent to, and valued by, target users; (c) suggest dissemination strategies that attract users and result in awareness and behavior change; and (d) assist in evaluating customer satisfaction and the overall impact of dissemination.

This issue of The Research Exchange expands upon the overview of market research techniques described in the previous issue (Vol. 5, No. 1).

This issue of *The Research Exchange* expands upon the overview of market research techniques described in the previous issue (Volume 5, Number 1). Some examples will be presented from NIDRR-funded researchers. Much of the research conducted by NIDRR's grantees includes strategies that are also used in market research. Grantees conduct research that includes analysis of secondary data; focus groups; pilot or usability testing; and surveys. These activities provide vital information concerning a range of disability issues and can also be used to identify ways to improve information sharing with consumers.

One concern commonly voiced by disability researchers relates to limited resources for conducting dissemination activities, including any market research. Market research is often thought to require a set of separate activities that relate primarily to dissemination. In this context, these activities may be considered subordinate to the research studies defined in the funded project. Successful models, however, have demonstrated that it is advantageous to include market research activities as integrated components of the research design and to implement them in conjunction with other research activities. When an effort is made to include market research from the beginning, human and financial resources are used more effectively and efficiently to learn about consumers' needs.

Smarter Dissemination

I hope you will recall from previous communications that the NCDDR does not consider the process of dissemination to be the simple transport of information from Point A to Point B. The NCDDR's view of the purpose of any dissemination effort is *utilization* by specific targeted audiences. Accomplishing this goal is often a challenge and our ability to accomplish it will be enhanced by borrowing and applying concepts from social marketing research literature.

NIDRR grantees can often envision potential outreach goals and applications of research-based information that increase the scope of information to be disseminated and the range of audiences who may benefit from the information. Frequently, we dismiss these thoughts or catalog them as something we may return to at some non-specific point in the future. We do this because we convince ourselves that we don't have the time, human resources, or funding to accomplish them. Most of the time, we do this without the benefit of any supporting data—simply, our personal perceptions.

As NIDRR grantees strive to accomplish more while maintaining high levels of quality, the NCDDR recognizes that we need to be smarter in our pursuit of dissemination and utilization outcomes. One way we can pursue "smarter dissemination" is by knowing more about social marketing concepts and principles. Being able to couch clear marketing questions and collect information to answer them, will help us go about our outreach efforts—now and in the future—in a more skillful way. Indeed, to an ever-increasing degree, the value of our work is being measured in terms of how well and how extensively it is being used or applied by others.

To facilitate our shared goal of smarter dissemination, this issue of *The Research Exchange* expands on the topic of social marketing research. NCDDR staff has attempted to highlight tools and strategies that many NIDRR grantees know and currently use. Enlarging the use of these tools to meet selected social marketing information needs is within the existing capability of most NIDRR grantees. Integrating marketing information into our dissemination efforts will expand options and increase our overall success in outreach.

John D. Westbrook, Ph.D.
Director, NCDDR

Putting Market Research to Work for Your Project

The following six steps are recommended for successful market research activities: (1) developing research objectives, (2) checking existing research, (3) selecting a market research team, (4) selecting a research technique, (5) designing the sample, and (6) implementing the results. These activities are similar to the steps in carrying out your research project activities, but with a different goal in mind.

① Developing Research Objectives

Whether the market research is conducted in-house or out-of-house, it is imperative that the purpose of the research is clearly defined—in terms of the problem to be solved. In some cases, researchers recommend developing a hypothesis and designing the market research around proving it. Others suggest developing a written market research plan. Either choice requires that the objectives be defined and communicated.

② Checking Existing Research

Prior to conducting direct research, a search should be conducted to determine what research is available from existing secondary research sources. Many external data sources can be tapped. Although secondary data may be very useful, there are two problems with relying solely on existing research. First, most of it is out-of-date by the time you read it. Secondly, no two research objectives are ever exactly the same. Secondary research is an appropriate supplement to, not replacement of, primary research.

③ Selecting a Market Research Team

Research can be conducted either in-house or by an outside market research specialist or team. Organizations need to weigh the various costs, including financial and human resources, to determine which works best for them. Expertise exists in many research organizations to conduct market research, which is often cost-effective. Market research that is conducted externally can lead to more objective results and allow the organization to focus on its primary research projects. Most outside market research firms specialize in a specific type of research and industry, including social marketing issues.

A directory of marketing research firms with over 4,500 listings, *Quirk's Marketing Research Review*, is published annually. The New York chapter of the American Marketing Association publishes the GreenBook each year, with extensive research listings (Blankenship, A.B., Breen, G.E., & Dutka, A., 1998).

④ Selecting a Research Technique

Outside research firms can offer recommendations on the technique that will best address the research objectives. Quantitative and qualitative market research activities provide different data, as with typical research activities. Quantitative research is used to get at the "what," "where," and "when" of user attitudes and behaviors. When done correctly, the results can be extrapolated to the representative population. Quantitative market research typically involves a survey

or questionnaire conducted in-person, via telephone or on paper. Such surveys are commonly implemented via snail mail.

Qualitative research is often used to uncover the "whys" of attitudes and behaviors. While the results cannot be applied to the universe of users, qualitative research is best used to more clearly define the research project so that a quantitative method can be employed. Two common examples of qualitative research techniques are *in-depth interviews* and *focus groups*, with focus groups being the most popular.

It is imperative to select the method that is most likely to achieve the desired objective as well as the method that makes it easiest for the sample group to respond, which will ultimately increase both the quality and quantity of responses.

⑤ Designing the Sample

Sample selection is critical in order to gather useful information from the right participants. Market researchers typically use one of six standard research techniques to select their sample. Three types of probability sampling frequently used are: (a) simple random sampling of the total population; (b) area sampling, which is a random sampling of a geographic area; and (c) stratified random sampling that takes a random sample of like user groups. Three types of non-probability sampling are also utilized: (a) convenience sampling, which selects convenient participants; (b) judgment sampling, which gives the researcher the jurisdiction to identify the most representative group; and (c) quota sampling that matches the overall population in some specific way.

⑥ Implementing the Results

Once the research has been conducted, it is imperative to relate the findings to the original objectives and formulate an action plan based on the results. This will be described more fully in the next issue (Volume 5, Number 3) on marketing strategies.

Secondary Market Research

When beginning a program, the crucial first step is to find any available information that is applicable to the marketing effort. Secondary data is information that has already been collected for another purpose—in journals, popular media, computer databases or other sources. A secondary research review can help to provide preliminary answers to questions about the scope of the public health or social problem, previous attempts to address the problem, who the probable target audience is, who the "competition" is (non-adoption of the "product" may be the main competitor) and information about potential media vehicles (Weinrich, 1999, p.1).

Secondary research is often the least expensive type of research and may have the easiest access. However, secondary research may be less reliable than primary research because the information obtained was not developed with the particular problem or specific market in mind. Key sources of information include technical and professional journals, public opinion polls, other disability researchers, consumer surveys, past coverage in newspapers, journals, consumer newsletters or magazines, census statistics and other demographic surveys, government reports, radio and television stations, and local advertising agencies and market research firms. Secondary market research also can include internal research that incorporates a research project's previous findings.

A great number of online sources exist from the business sector that either directly include market research information or provide links that lead to such information. Following are some sources available on the World Wide Web:

1. List of Secondary Data Sources for Marketing Research, Vanderbilt University:

   <http://www2000.ogsm.vanderbilt.edu/guide.html>

2. Vivamus Selected Web Sites For Market Research:

   <http://www.vivamus.com/Links/urlindex.html>

3. American Demographics (journal):

   <http://www.demographics.com/>

4. Researching Your Markets, SANWA Bank:

   <http://www.tradeport.org/ts/trade_expert/market/what/index.html>

5. Yahoo Business and Economy: Companies:Information:

   <http://dir.yahoo.com/Business_and_Economy/Companies/Information/>

6. Market Research, University of Texas:

   <http://advertising.utexas.edu/world/Market.html>

7. The Marketing Source: The Only Complete Reference for Marketing Pros:

   <http://www.infotechmarketing.net/thesource.htm>

Market Research Tools

Following is a discussion of selected market research techniques, accompanied in some cases by examples from NIDRR-funded research activities. The intent of this discussion is to show how these tools can be used to gather market research data.

In addition to formal techniques, there are many informal techniques for gathering information about consumers to supplement formal techniques. These include, but are not limited to, customer service/complaint calls records, advisory board discussions, informal consumer conversations, anecdotal evidence, and employee observations.

Customer Visits

In business, customer visits are valuable for gathering market research information. Decision-makers who do not regularly interact with customers have a different perspective from sales and customer service personnel. In the same way, new information may be gathered from consumers, or potential information users to help the researcher identify options in the development of research projects and dissemination activities.

Visits may be *outbound*, where the researcher visits the consumer, or *d*, with the visit to the researcher.

Outbound visits allow the researcher to view the environment and frame the discussion in the context of that setting, with a potential for a more direct relationship to the consumer's needs. Inbound visits provide a view of the researcher's environment and may add credibility to the source of the research. Also, standardization can be implemented more easily onsite.

The visits include directed interviews or conversations with expert informants—he consumers. Interviewers need a standardized list of questions to guide the interviews and a standardized method for recording the responses in order to capture the data. Probing is a key skill in this process. Probing serves to extend and clarify the respondent's initial answers, and provides opportunities to elicit ideas about possible options to explore in research development and dissemination.

Benefits of Customer Visits in Market Research. In general, fewer additional resources are needed, and researchers can count on a high completion rate with timely feedback. Structured interviews with users may add to market research data through eliciting responses to specific questions about what users want and need. Informal visits may also occur when market research is not the primary reason for the visit. Such visits (perhaps during consultation or technical assistance) may be valuable opportunities for data gathering that will help inform decisions about dissemination and utilization planning (McQuarrie, 1996).

Focus Groups

The traditional focus group format involves 8-12 individuals with a moderator who leads the group through a loosely-structured, free flowing dialogue around a particular topic. The moderator is trained in the process and a discussion outline is prepared to guide the focus group. Participants are screened to meet desired criteria and are sometimes provided with a financial incentive for participating.

Typically, several focus groups are conducted to gain greater insight. Using a facility especially designed for focus groups will allow for watching via a one-way mirror, the opportunity to send notes to the moderator to adjust the questioning, and the ability to videotape for later viewing. Trained outside moderators can also make for more objective results. New Directions Consulting publishes the *National Directory of Focus Group Discussion Facilities* annually (Blankenship, A.B., Breen, G.E., & Dutka, A. (1998).

The dynamic of the group process allows the "creative juices" to begin flowing between group members during each session. The resulting data are richer than aggregating data from individual user visits.

There are a number of advantages to using focus groups:

- **Large Amount of Information.** Because each group member can respond to, elaborate on, criticize, modify, or otherwise react to the comments of other group members, focus groups can significantly increase

the total volume of information gleaned over what would be the sum of six to ten individual interviews.

- **Minimal interview effects.** If the moderator is well-versed in conducting focus groups, he or she will act to stimulate the group at times or to keep the discussion on track. Participants will most often be responding to the remarks of others like themselves. Because focus groups members are usually actively caught up in the discussion, respondents are less likely to try to guess the purpose of the study or try to please or impress the moderator.

- **Greater chance for creative output.** In an individual interview situation, the respondent has to pay attention and answer all questions. In a group situation, participants speak when they want to do so. The lack of pressure tends to make respondents feel less constrained and more spontaneous and enthusiastic in their participation. This fosters a situation ripe for ideas and thoughts that the researchers might not have anticipated, but are nonetheless valuable.

- **Conserves resources.** Because several people are interviewed at once, the research organization can use resources for a professional moderator more efficiently than if hour-long individual interviews were conducted.

- **Natural setting.** A one-on-one interview situation is usually highly artificial. In a focus group, often a more informal atmosphere exists and helps put participants at ease.

- **Fast turnaround time.** The results of a focus group can be written up immediately after the group has been conducted. This is important to do immediately while the experience is still fresh, particularly if the same moderator is conducting several focus groups.

Disadvantages include: difficulty in covering more than one topic; limits of geography and logistics of gathering participants; more expensive than some methods, when done properly; may yield biased results if done in-house.

New technologies offer other options for conducting focus groups, for

Focus Groups Go Online

In a traditional focus group, one person speaks at a time, and sometimes one person tends to dominate. Online, because everyone is composing his answer to the moderator's questions simultaneously, everyone has a chance to speak equally, and they are influenced less by those around them.

Focus groups have long been a staple of marketers and business planners—now they are moving online as companies test new product names and the effectiveness of Web sites. The main advantage is speed; the main drawback is the absence of personal interaction when people communicate online. There is a subtle difference in how the questions are asked and answered in person and online, said David Bradford, a vice president and director of The Virtual Research Room, a marketing research firm, also known as Vrroom, that is based in New York. "There's a different interface," Mr. Bradford said. "In a traditional focus group, one person speaks at a time, and sometimes one person tends to dominate. Online, because everyone is composing his answer to the moderator's questions simultaneously, everyone has a chance to speak equally, and they are influenced less by those around them."

Can Web focus groups provide answers that are applicable to more general audiences? Can the people who use the Internet, which not long ago was a place largely for young white men who were educated and technologically adept, men, speak for everyone? "A few years ago, there was more bias in a group of Internet respondents," said Susan Roth, the director of qualitative research at Greenfield Online, a marketing research company, "but that's changing. As more and more people use the Internet, that group is getting closer and closer to the demographics of the general population."

example, using the World Wide Web to convene participants in front of computer screens in varied locations.

Focus Groups in Market Research.
In commercial marketing, focus groups are often used for formative research on needs, wants and perceptions; development of questionnaires; pretesting of product or service concepts, communications themes, and execution of messages; and assessment of customer satisfaction and dissatisfaction (Andreasen, 1995, p. 115).

It is also the research method most used in social marketing (Weinreich, 1999). Focus groups are particularly

useful in pre-testing. They may be used as a strategy to gain the insights and involvement of users as research activities are developed, and may help expand both the user audience and the scope of the research.

Caution must be used, however, as focus groups do depend on a small sample of participants that may not ultimately represent the larger body. The focus group must be well-planned and carried out in an organized manner with appropriate data collection. Even if well-planned, a quantitative method may be needed to verify results for the target population.

NIDRR Research Example:

Use of Focus Groups in Obtaining the Perspectives of Vocational · Rehabilitation Administrators and Counselors

This example of the use of focus groups is from NIDRR-funded research. Focus groups were used to gain the perspectives of State Vocational Rehabilitation professionals about the Rehabilitation Act Amendments of 1992. Although it was not conducted as market research, it does provide insights into the ways in which information from focus groups may be summarized and used as a basis for application and utilization of research outcomes.

Clearly, social marketing information-gathering can assist in promoting change and identifying current and potential "barriers" to the change process. This example demonstrates that attitudinal and knowledge differences can be made evident by using focus group techniques with relevant target audiences.

The example below can be found at <http://web1.tch.harvard.edu/ici/publications/text/rp7-96.html>. It has been edited for use in this issue of *The Research Exchange*.

Multiple Perspectives on Implementing the Rehabilitation Act Amendments of 1992

Jean Whitney-Thomas and Dawna M. Thomas
The Center on Promoting Employment (RRTC)
Children's Hospital & the University of Massachusetts at Boston
July, 1996

INTRODUCTION

The first years of this decade saw a surge in the rethinking and redrafting of policy related to disability in this country. The Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, the reauthorization of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act in 1991, and the 1992 Rehabilitation Act Amendments comprise a body of clearly articulated anti- discrimination legislation and service priorities. These laws emphasize greater access to services and full involvement of individuals with disabilities in community life and service delivery (Goodall, Lawyer, & Wehman, 1994; Weber, 1994). In the Fall of 1994, the Institute for Community Inclusion convened a series of focus groups · of vocational rehabilitation administrators and counselors in order to better understand how the Rehabilitation Act Amendments have been implemented in one state's system. The findings reported briefly here describe what these individuals perceive as the most important elements of the Amendments and how they feel service delivery has changed as a result.

PARTICIPANTS

A total of 11 state and local office administrators and counselors participated in three focus groups. The groups were organized so that members with similar positions and experiences within the VR system participated in the same discussion. Among the participants were three women and eight men; a number of whom had challenges including physical, medical, mild cognitive and visual impairments. These rehabilitation professionals have an average of 15 (ranging from 4.5-22) years of service in the state VR system. Three of the participants reported having Certified Rehabilitation Counselor (CRC) licensure.

VARYING ROLES, VARYING PERSPECTIVES

State level administrators provided the most global perspective on the law's intentions and its desired impact. They used the term "paradigm shift" to indicate the Amendments' proposal for broad-based change in disability policies and practices. They saw the Amendments as a clear mandate to refocus the VR process from "employability" to "employment." As one state administrator said,

"The purpose of the program is to put people to work. Not get ready to work; not talk about work, going to work, or think about work; not services, but work."

Finally, this group described the Amendments to the law as emphasizing consumer empowerment, active involvement in the vocational rehabilitation process, and as a mechanism to implement the Americans with Disabilities Act. In contrast to the state level administrators, local office administrators and supervisors provided insight on the law's impact on daily procedures, counselor decision making process, and professional development. Their discussion focused much more on the day-to-day management of the VR system given the new law. In their eyes, the Amendments gave greater autonomy to the counselors by allowing them to make eligibility decisions on an abbreviated timetable. When asked about consumer empowerment issues, these administrators did not feel that this was a new issue or as one person said, "a revelation."

All three groups talked about the new 60 day eligibility decision-making process and agreed that this change had the greatest impact on the VR system's delivery of services. Administrators saw the 60 day limit as a streamlining mechanism to break through the system's barriers and bureaucracy. Counselors disagreed, however, and felt that the 60 day eligibility process prevents them from providing the same level of individualized service and counseling as they did prior to the Amendments. As one counselor said, "It seems like I'm doing an awful lot more work now than I did before the law. Different kind of work, I should say... more paper work... there are also more hoops to jump through: I also find that I'm pushing clients away more, where I may spend a lot of counseling time with clients to get them to where they want to go before the Act." The counselors suggested that the new eligibility timeline may actually hinder elements of the amendments that are less easily defined such as consumer empowerment and improved services.

IMPLICATIONS

These discussion groups give insight into the meaning of the amended rehabilitation law but falls short of answering the question as to whether the amendments have been successfully implemented. Below is a list of recommendations for future attempts to understand change in the state Vocational Rehabilitation agencies:

Compare impressions of change across levels of the agency. Since there is evidence of different interpretations of the law, future investigations of change should take into consideration this potential diversity. Larger samples of counselors and administrators may have different opinions when asked whether or not day-to-day practice has changed. The perspectives of VR personnel should be compared and the samples should include voices from multiple levels in the agency.

The voice of the consumer should be heard. As part of the study from which these findings come, a focus group of consumers were asked for their impressions of the changes in the law. These individuals were not aware of the law itself, although each person had a great deal to say about their experiences within the state's VR system. This small set of consumers who were not aware of the Amendments, may or may not be representative of national or even statewide trends. A larger sample of VR consumers should be surveyed as to their knowledge of the Amendments and their impression of change in the delivery of VR services.

Mechanisms to measure and enhance consumer involvement need to be developed. The Amendments were crafted around the principles of consumer empowerment and involvement in the rehabilitation process. There is a need to document consumer involvement where it occurs, identify areas where it is lacking, and develop strategies to enhance involvement generally. Future research should explore the knowledge, role, and influence that consumers have of policy and on service delivery.

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Market Research Tools
continued from page 7

Choice Modeling

In choice modeling, the underlying assumption is that any product or service offering can be conceptualized as a bundle of attributes. Each of these attributes may be more or less important to any particular user, and each attribute may be possessed to a greater or lesser degree by any particular product design. (Adapted from McQuarrie, 1996, p. 101)

Choice modeling is a process of analyzing various components of a product or service to determine which factors influence users to choose certain options over others. Users may rate attributes such as: (a) the interest level of each component; (b) the value of each component; (c) possible uses for each component; and (d) ease of use of each component. Choice modeling is particularly useful in field testing products—including research information—to develop decisions about necessary changes prior to widespread dissemination or implementation.

Applied to NIDRR-funded projects, a variety of dissemination approaches may be piloted with user audiences to explore the relative values a variety of users place on key components of each approach. This information can help the researcher in selecting the most appropriate attributes to include in dissemination products or activities. In piloting such choices, the researcher can follow the steps used in *direct weighting of attribute importance:*

Step 1. The researcher provides two or more dissemination options for user choice modeling. This could include development of format options, such as fact sheets, brief reports, full articles, implementation guides, Web pages, etc. for a sample of users to analyze.

Step 2. The sample of users should be familiar with the research topic. Participants rate each format on how effectively it delivers each particular attribute. Attributes can be abstract or concrete (for example ease of use,

professional support, usefulness in their setting, media, and content).

Step 3. Users rate the importance of each attribute for each format according to their own perceptions and self-determined potential to produce behavior change.

Step 4. Additional information should be collected, such as previous awareness of the information, and a rank ordering of preferences among the dissemination formats presented. (Adapted from McQuarrie, 1996, p. 106-107)

Choice Modeling for NIDRR Grantees
Though it has been primarily used to analyze components of physical products, choice modeling offers researchers the opportunity to gain user perspectives of the relative usefulness of various forms of dissemination media and content, such as presentations, journal articles, fact sheets, and implementation guides, among other available formats and modes.

Usability Testing

Usability tests are pilot or field tests that provide empirical evidence, before it is disseminated, that test participants can effectively use the product or research information. It evaluates interactions between products and users. According to McQuarrie (1996):

People are notoriously poor at the task of accurately describing step-by-step what they do in a certain situation. Such self-knowledge is tacit and inaccessible. It is far more effective to provide an environment in which people perform some action and then to closely observe the behavior (p. 132).

Usability tests measure the interactions between users and the product format in ways that facilitate redesign of the product or correction of design errors. This may be applied to dissemination activities to improve physical products or revise research information to make them more useful to target users. Such testing is particularly relevant to the dissemination of user's guides or step-by-step instructions that can benefit

from evaluations of their ability to be understood and appropriately applied by a sample of market research subjects.

Usability testing typically entails a four step procedure:

1. *Find or create a test area.* A test area includes the necessary equipment or resources for testing. It also should include (a) a one-way mirror for observation; (b) or an unobtrusive video camera to capture actions and facial expressions; and (c) necessary data collection equipment, such as key stroke counters, ergonomic measurement devices and other equipment depending on the product and user sample.

2. *Determine the tasks you want the users to perform.* Define the tasks for the users with enough information to get each person started in his or her interactions with the product.

3. *Recruit users.* The sample of users should reflect the diversity of the population of target users for the product.

4. *Evaluate the results.* Delays, errors, or adapted responses can be used to diagnose problems in the product's design. (Adapted from McQuarrie, 1996, p. 134)

Using *contextual inquiry* involves testing of products or disability research information in the settings for which they are designed. Contextual inquiry allows researchers to observe users interacting with products or implementing research information in settings where barriers are likely to be encountered and competing factors are present. It also allows testing of the researcher's instructions, user guides, or other skill building information in environments that do not require generalization of skills from the laboratory to the actual settings where the skills will be used. This approach holds the promise of providing the most accurate information about necessary functional revisions to products or research information (McQuarrie, 1996).

Usability Testing for NIDRR Grantees
Usability testing differs from choice modeling in that a sample of users are

provided opportunities to actually interact with or implement the product. Consumers can interact with research information and formatting chosen and provided by the NIDRR grantee. In testing product formats, the researcher can observe the user actually manipulating the product and determine the relative ease of use and utility of the product first hand. In testing research information it may take a longer time period to observe sample users implementing new service strategies, through observations of the users' accuracy and identifying their concerns during implementation.

Surveys

Surveys can be developed to measure a user's knowledge, attitudes, and behavior, or a combination of these elements. Measurement of knowledge is important to finding the extent to which users are familiar with research topics, disability issues, products available, or dissemination media. Many surveys include classifying or qualifying questions, where only those with an understanding of the topic can respond. Measurement of behavior may be most important in market research. Both knowledge and attitudes are displayed in the user's behavior.

It is important to ensure you are not testing for knowledge when your interest is in *attitudes*. Measurement of attitudes involves soliciting the users' opinions about a topic or product. In many cases, respondents may not have formed their opinions prior to the survey, and researchers should be careful not to construct survey questions that explicitly or implicitly bias unformed attitudes.

> "If you want to know how long people wait in line, the best way is to use a stopwatch. But, if you want to know how they feel about waiting in line, use a survey" (Simply Better, 1997, p. II-8).

Surveys are also commonly used in market research as a confirmatory technique to assist in decision making after the product has been disseminated. They serve to confirm the level of user satisfaction and to solicit information that may lead to product improvement.

Researchers and educators commonly use surveys for evaluating

presentations or training sessions. However, researchers could expand their use of surveys to conduct follow-up analyses of publications, to gain user perspectives about Web pages, to gather user satisfaction data concerning improvements following implementation of research-based programs, and to acquire a variety of other information about users' perceptions of research-based products or information formats.

Surveys may be implemented in a variety of ways. Telephone surveys are quick, as responses may be gathered at once with limited waiting time. However, respondents may be less committed than when responding to in-person interviews. Interviewers must be careful not to influence responses. Mail surveys allow participants to work at their own speed, with no interviewer bias. They can gather large amounts of solid data, if materials are well-prepared. In mail surveys, you rely on the respondent to understand and interpret questions correctly, and usually mailed surveys have lower response rates compared to other methods, particularly if the survey is long. Also, you do not know what non-respondents are thinking.

Please provide the NCDDR staff with your impressions. Answer and return the enclosed postage-paid NCDDR Customer Survey card.

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❶ What personal and work affiliations best describe you?
❏ Person with a disability
❏ Family member of a person with a disability

❏ Advocacy
❏ Committee on Employment
❏ Consumer Organization
❏ Direct Service Provider
❏ Federal/State Legislator/Aide
❏ Health Care Professional
❏ Independent Living Center
❏ Journalist

❏ OSERS Staff
❏ NIDRR Grantee
❏ Researcher
❏ State Special Education Agency
❏ State Vocational Rehabilitation Agency
❏ Teacher/School Administrator
❏ University Student/Faculty/Staff
❏ Other Affiliation _____

❷ Have you received information/material from the NCDDR previously?
❏ Yes　　　　　　　❏ No　　　　　　　❏ Don't Know

❸ This product _____ **31** _____ **from the NCDDR is:**
　　　　　　　Name of Product
❏ Very useful　　　　❏ Useful　　　　❏ Not useful, at this time

NIDRR Research Example:

Combined Use of Usability Tests and Surveys in Assessing Universal Product Design

The following example demonstrates usability testing of a universal design assessment instrument, using a survey format. The study included tests of the universal usability qualities of four common household products. Users' perceptions of the usefulness of the usability assessment instrument were examined through a survey. The example also provides evidence of built-in marketing features of the study and potential application of the results in the marketing of universal design concepts. This document has been edited for use in this issue of *The Research Exchange*.

Promoting the Practice of Universal Design

A Field-Initiated Development Project by the Center for Universal Design
Funded by the National Institute on Disability and Rehabilitation Research (NIDRR),
June 1, 1998 to May 31, 2001

From 1994 to 1997, the Center for Universal Design coordinated the development of the Principles of Universal Design (The Center for Universal Design, 1997) under a NIDRR-funded Research and Demonstration Project. The Principles were a major achievement in facilitating understanding of Universal Design, and today they are widely used internationally in design education, research and development. The critical next step in implementing Universal Design is spreading its influence beyond the research community to accelerate its adoption by industry and acceptance by consumers.

Initial stages of the Promoting the Practice of Universal Design project included the development and testing of a set of Universal Design Performance Measures based on the Principles of Universal Design. Two sets of Universal Design Performance Measures were developed, one set for consumers to use in evaluating products for their own use, and another set for practicing professional product designers to use in developing products for diverse consumer markets. The Performance Measures were tested using a combined usability test and survey approach that measured respondents' perceptions of the universal design characteristics of four common consumer products.

The consumer and designer versions of the Universal Design Performance Measures, called "Product Evaluation Surveys" on the test documents, each comprised a set of 29 statements corresponding to the 29 guidelines in the Principles of Universal Design. The Principles and the two versions of the Survey address the same issues, but each takes a different approach. As an example, the following table compares Section 2: *Flexibility in Use* in each of the three documents.

The Principles of Universal Design	Consumers' Product Evaluation Survey	Designers' Product Evaluation Survey
2A. Provide choice in methods of use.	2A. I can use this product in whatever way(s) are safe and effective for me.	2A. The product offers any user at least one way to use it safely and effectively.
2B. Accommodate right- or left-handed access and use.	2B. I can use this product with either my right or left side side (hand or foot) alone.	2B. This product can be used by either right- or left-dominant users, including amputees with or without prostheses.
2C. Facilitate the user's accuracy and precision.	2C. I can use this product precisely and accurately.	2C. This product facilitates (or does not require) the user's accuracy and precision.
2D. Provide adaptability to the user's pace.	2D. I can use this product as quickly or as slowly as I want.	2D. This product can be used as quickly or as slowly as the user wants.

Each statement in the Product Evaluation Surveys provided for six response options: Strongly Agree, Agree, Neither Agree Nor Disagree, Disagree, Strongly Disagree, and Not Important. Respondents were asked to circle or "X" their responses to each statement.

The Performance Measures were tested with 60 consumer households and 18 designer households. These households were chosen to be as diverse a group as possible in terms of age, abilities, geographic location, race, socioeconomic status, and home/family situation. In order to assess the true universal usability of the Performance Measures, the consumer group included 60 households, 36 of which contained at least one member with an identifiable disability and 24 of which contained no one with a disability. The designer group included 18 house-holds, some containing individuals with disabilities, and representing a range of experience with and attitudes toward universal design.

The final 60 consumer households participating in the project were located in 25 states, and the 18 designer households were located in nine states. Individual household members ranged in age from infants to 87 years old. In each of six age categories, test participants included individuals with disabilities of upper extremities, lower extremities, vision, hearing, cognition, and health (including multiple chemical sensitivity).

Each household tested the Performance Measures through the evaluation of four consumer products: a cordless hand vacuum cleaner, a digital alarm clock, a plastic food storage container, and a set of ten single-serving breakfast cereals. Participants were asked to have everyone in the household use each product, as appropriate, and keep a carefully structured journal documenting everyone's use of and comments about the products. After using the products for a few weeks, the testing participants were asked to complete a set of four Product Evaluation Surveys, one for each product.

The test results provide a wealth of information about both the consumers, and designers, quantified levels of satisfaction and narrative comments regarding all aspects of using each of the sample products. Preliminary test results suggest that consumers did not agree on the usefulness of the Performance Measures (Survey), although data analysis is underway and the commonalities among those who found them useful have not yet been determined. The designers found the Performance Measures to be less useful than the consumers, but preliminary analysis suggests that productively applying the Performance Measures may require a reasonable knowledge base regarding universal design. To address this need, informational materials will be developed in the final period of the project to augment the Evaluative Survey; they will be distributed together.

The process of recruiting participants for the testing activities also served to pre-market the results of the project. In addition to the 78 households serving as testers, more than 250 individuals, who volunteered to take part in the project but could not be included, requested to receive project results when they are available.

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Using Market Research for the Dissemination and Utilization of Disability Research

Making Market Research Useful

NIDRR grantees may have limited resources for conducting market research. These limited resources may present some difficulties in determining the most effective ways to disseminate research information in ways preferred by consumers and other target audiences. This is similar to the dilemma faced by social marketers who may worry that "research will cost too much. Yet, on the other hand, he or she knows that listening to customers is the only (relatively) fool-proof way to make sure that a project is on the right track" (Andreasen, 1995, p. 98).

The solution is simple: *"Conduct research only when it helps make a better decision!"* (Andreasen, 1995, p. 98). The following considerations will help in determining whether market research will aid in decision making.

Are facts needed? The most common scenario for implementing market research is when there is a lack of knowledge about some important aspect of the environment and information about it is needed for decision making purposes.

Might change be needed? Market research can be used collect data about customer satisfaction information in order to determine whether or not change is needed.

Is reinforcement needed? Market research may be conducted to provide data to justify a course of action to colleagues and others. (Adapted from Andreasen, 1995, pp. 98-101)

It may be helpful to make a move-ahead decision on market research only if the researcher can answer "yes" to each of these three questions:

1. Can you afford this? (And, equally important, can you afford not to do this?)

2. Will the data be worth the cost?

3. Do you know what you will do with the results? (White, 1997, p. 73).

Some opportunities for market research may be overlooked due to incorrect assumptions, such as:

Thinking of market research only in terms of surveys. There are many techniques that can make the difference between a good decision and a better one. Think about which research technique is most appropriate for each specific project.

Thinking of market research as expensive. There are many approaches that can improve the researcher's decision to a degree that justifies the cost. Adding a few items to research already planned can add knowledge needed to improve D&U activities without creating new costs.

Thinking that market research takes a long time and will only slow things down. Using dissemination formats and strategies that are not appropriate for target audiences and do not result in utilization take longer to correct and have higher overall costs in the long run. (Adapted from Andreasen, 1995, pp. 104-105)

This issue of *The Research Exchange* discusses a number of strategies and techniques for conducting market research. The central concern of this issue is that market research techniques can be valuable components of a disability research project to help make better dissemination decisions. This connection reinforces the idea that market research need not be a separate activity, but one that can be integrated into the workings of funded research.

Listening to users is what drives the improvement and expansion of dissemi-nation efforts. Market research provides new avenues for listening to users to make decisions that can enhance dissemination efforts and expand the utilization of NIDRR-funded disability research by changing user awareness and behavior.

The next issue (Volume 5, Number 3) will present and describe innovative marketing strategies and dissemination techniques. Examples from NIDRR grantees will provide ideas for other grantees to expand their repertoire of dissemination activities.

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The National Center for the Dissemination of Disability Research Wants You to Share your Success Stories in Dissemination and Utilization

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Success Stories 2000

As a new feature of the NCDDR's 1999-2004 scope of work, we will contact you annually to solicit examples to demonstrate:

* Overcoming an identified dissemination "barrier"

* Reaching new target audiences with needed information

* Addressing linguistic, cultural and cognitive diversity among your audiences

* Applying Social Marketing techniques through your dissemination activities

* Achieving a unique impact through your dissemination efforts

* Highlighting individual benefits produced through your work

Enhance your NIDRR project's visibility through a Success Stories 2000 publication, the NCDDR Web site, and perhaps also the media. Watch for the invitation later this summer.

Grantees can greatly help by letting us know when an item representing their project appears in the media.

Please call or send an email to the NCDDR when your project has an interaction with the media and we will review the piece for inclusion.

Criteria for Inclusion in *Who's in the News* are:

* Story must have appeared in a nationally circulated disability media source, excluding newsletters and other media published by NIDRR grantees

* Story must have appeared in a major newspaper with potential for national distribution

* Broadcast must have been on a national TV or radio source

* Story must have been published as a news item by a national professional organization, with national distribution

* Story must highlight activities or results of research acknowledging funding through NIDRR.

You may also use the online form:

http://www.ncddr.org/forms/newsrecognition.html

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Research

NIDRR Grantee News/Recognition Form

See page 14 for this issue's Who's in the News.

NCDDR staff are on the lookout for popular and disability media pieces that present research funded by NIDRR. In this issue, we share news items from

• The **New York Times**

• **CNN Financial Network**

• **ABC News**,

• **Sun Technologies' Web site**

On March 21, 2000, the **New York Times** published an article in their *Capital Dispatch* section entitled *Report Highlights Digital Divide for the Disabled*. The story highlights a report prepared by the Disability Statistics RRTC, University of California at San Francisco. Dr. Stephen Kaye, Principal Analyst at the Center, was quoted: "The barriers for online access among disabled people stem from a combination of things. Income is a big factor. People with disabilities tend to be poor. People with disabilities tend to have less education, or they are lacking job experience and skills, things that computers could help them overcome."

The article was written by Times reporter **Jeri Clausing**. Dr. Kaye initially contacted her because "I knew she was the reporter at the Times most likely to cover digital divide issues (note that she is not a reporter who covers disability issues, which would have been another avenue of approach)." Dr. Kaye sent Ms. Clausing the recent RRTC report entitled *Computer and Internet Use Among People with Disabilities* (available from the RRTC for Disability Statistics Web site <http://dsc.ucsf.edu>). Ms. Clausing subsequently followed up through email and a telephone interview with Dr. Kaye. According to Dr. Kaye, "One result of the story was that traffic on our Web site (which was mentioned in the article) doubled during the week that the piece appeared." An online version of the New York Times article is available at: <http://www.nytimes.com/library/tech/00/03/cyber/capital/21capital.html>

NOTE: *Free registration is required to access New York Times articles.*

In addition, on April 17, 2000 President Clinton issued a fact sheet on *The Importance Of Bridging The Digital Divide and Creating Digital Opportunity For All Americans* that referred to Dr. Kaye's report:

"People with disabilities are less likely to have access to technology. 11 percent of people aged 15 and above with a disability have access to the Internet at home, compared to 31 percent of people without disabilities (Current Population Survey, 1998 Computer and Internet Use Supplement, as cited in H. Stephen Kaye, Computer and Internet Use Among People with Disabilities, Disability Statistics Center, March 2000)." The fact sheet is available at <http://www.pub.whitehouse.gov/urires/I2R?urn:pdi://oma.eop.gov.us/2000/4/19/12.text.1>

For further information contact Dr. Stephen Kaye at 1-415-502-7266, or email: **<skaye@itsa.ucsf.edu>**

On March 23, 2000, the **CNN Financial Network** (CNNFN) broadcast a story entitled *Jobs for the disabled: Employment options have improved for people with developmental disabilities*. The broadcast included quotes from Dr. William Kiernan, Principal Investigator of the RRTC on State Systems and Employment: "About 30 to 50 years ago, we didn't think people with disabilities could do anything, and we treated them accordingly, about 20 to 25 years ago, we assumed they could do things but only special things, light assembly work, like putting stickers on things. Around 15 years ago, so called 'supported employment' caught on. Developmentally disabled people received on-the-job training and support to help them keep their jobs." The broadcast was developed by CNNFN staff writer **Alex Frew McMillan**. The CNNFN story can be found at: <http://cnnfn.com/2000/03/23/career/q_disability/>

The CNNFN story followed earlier interactions between Dr. Kiernan and **Peter Imber** of **ABC News** which broadcast a story about employment of people with disabilities on February 22, 2000. The ABC broadcast did not include footage of Dr. Kiernan or other RRTC staff, yet they did consult them on the contents of the broadcast.

For further information contact Dr. William Kiernan at 1-617-355-7074 or email: **<KIERNANW@A1.TCH.Harvard.edu>**

On March 22, 2000 the Sun Technologies' **java.sun.com** Web site posted an article entitled *Bridging the Gap: Java (TM) Access Bridge Links Window-based Assistive Technologies to the Java Platform*. The article quotes Neal Ewers, Instrumentation Specialist, at the Rehabilitation Engineering Research Center on Telecommunication Access, Trace Center, Madison, Wisconsin: "The challenge for assistive technologies, specifically screen readers, is to help blind users see the page. If I am blind, I have to hear what I 'see,' and I can only 'see' one thing at a time. The challenge to the screen reader in multifaceted applications is to be able to provide the complete picture when you're only seeing one thing at a time." An online version of the java.sun.com article is available at: <http://java.sun.com/features/2000/03/accessbridge.html>

The article was developed by **Mary Smaragdis** at Sun Technologies who initially contacted Trace Center when she began developing the story. According to Ms. Smaragdis, "The Java 2 platform specifically made enabling technology—the Java Accessibility API--a core component. As such it facilitates the development of accessible applications and enables assistive technologies, such as screen readers or speech recognition technology, to get at the information contained in applications."

For further information contact Neal Ewers at 1-608-262-6966 or Email: **<web@trace.wisc.edu>**

NIDRR Grantee and Staff Recognition

The NCDDR congratulates each of the following NIDRR grantees and staff members. All grantees are encouraged to contact the NCDDR with information to share in future issues of *The Research Exchange*.

Carol Cohen, Assistive Technology Program Manager at **NIDRR**, was awarded the *Strache Leadership Award* at a banquet ceremony during the Annual Conference on Technology and Persons with Disabilities sponsored by the Center on Disabilities, California State University at Northridge (CSUN) on March 21, 2000. Ms. Cohen received the award in recognition of her demonstrated ability to motivate those who reach out to the disability community via the 56 NIDRR-funded projects authorized under the Assistive Technology Act of 1998 (AT Act), improving the quality of life for countless people with disabilities and their families throughout the country. For additional information contact the **Center on Disabilities**, CSUN at (818) 677-2578 or email **Carol Cohen** at <Carol_Cohen@ed.gov>

NIDRR Director **Dr. Katherine Seelman** was recognized by the National Association of Rehabilitation and Research Training Centers (NARRTC) at its annual meeting in Washington, DC on May 8, 2000. *The Distinguished Service Award* is the NARRTC's only award and is presented when an individual is identified by the membership and there is consensus on a deserving nominee. **Dr. Seelman** is recognized by the NARRTC "for her leadership in government and her exceptional professional commitment to improve the economic and social status of persons with disabilities through federally sponsored research, development, technology, and innovations that [?] individual goals and choices.[?]

The 1999 Mary E. Switzer Fellows presented the *Mary E. Switzer Honors* to **Katherine D. Seelman, Ph.D.,** at the Switzer Seminar 2000, held in Washington, D.C. May 24-25, 2000. The group honored **Dr. Seelman** for her leadership in advancing rehabilitation research and her achievement as being the first Mary Switzer Fellow to become Director of NIDRR. The Switzer Fellowship Alumni are interested in knowing about and recognizing the achievements of former Switzer Fellows who have made a contribution to the field. For additional information, email **Ellen Blasiotti** at <Ellen_Blasiotti@ed.gov>

The American Foundation for the Blind recognized **Dancing Dots**, a former NIDRR grantee, as one of four *Access Awards* winners at its Josephine L. Taylor Leadership Institute on March 3, 2000. The *Access Awards* are given to individuals, corporations, and organizations that create innovations in technology that substantially reduce inequities faced by people who are blind or visually impaired. Dancing Dots <http://www.dancingdots.com/> received the award for their GOODFEEL Braille music translation software that opens doors for blind or visually impaired musicians. For additional information contact **Bill McCann** of Dancing Dots at **(610) 783-6692**, or email: <info@dancingdots.com>

The **Assistive Technology Solutions** project (Knowledge Dissemination Project to Enhance the Transfer of Rehabilitation Engineering and Assistive Technologies to People with Disabilities) was nominated by project consultant, Mr. Gerald Weisman of Vermont Technical College, for inclusion in the Stockholm Challenge. The Challenge is a competition sponsored by the City of Stockholm, Sweden, and the European Commission to recognize information technology projects of excellence on a global basis. Since 1997, more than 700 projects have been submitted from more than 25 cities and 60 countries around the world. Assistive Technology Solutions is operated by the Cerebral Palsy Research Foundation of Kansas, Inc. and supports a Web site <http://www.atsolutions.org/> that makes available information on low-technology

assistive devices and plans for fabricating them. The project did not win the Grand Prize at the Stockholm Challenge, but we congratulate the staff on the nomination! For additional information, contact **Robert Hull**, VP for Research, at **(316) 652-1551**, or email: <bobh@cprf.org>

RTC on Secondary Conditions of Spinal Cord Injury Principal Investigators **Ken Waites, MD** and **Michael J. DeVivo, DrPH,** won *First Place Poster* at the American Spinal Injury Association Meeting in Atlanta on April 14-18, 2000. The poster was titled *Microbiology of the urethra and perineum and its relationship to bactiuria in community residing men with spinal cord injury.* Authors were Ken Waites; Brandy Osborn, BS; Kay Canupp, MSN; Eneida Brookings, MT; and Michael DeVivo. Contact for additional information is **Kay Canupp**, at **(205)934-0355**, or via email: <canupp@sun.rehabm.uab.edu>

Jay Meythaler, JD, MD, Co-Project Director of the **UAB Traumatic Brain Injury Care System (TBICS)** was invited to join the American Academy of Neurology Practice *Guideline Committee on Guillian-Barre Syndrome.* Contact **Dr. Meythaler** via email: <meythaler@sun.rehabm.uab.edu> for additional information.

LaDonna Fowler, Director of American Indian Projects at the **Research and Training Center for Rural Rehabilitation Services**, was honored in Chicago on June 19th, 2000, as one of the twenty great leaders of the disability rights movement. Access Living of Chicago celebrated its 20th anniversary by choosing *Twenty Leaders for Twenty Years* and honoring them at its 2000 Annual Benefit in the Grand Ballroom of Chicago's Navy Pier. The Benefit was co-chaired by Dr. Henry B. Betts, Chairman of the Rehabilitation Institute of Chicago Foundation, and Patrick G. Ryan, Chairman and Executive Officer of Aon Corporation. For more information, contact **Diana Spas**, RTC: Rural's Information Specialist, **(406) 243-5760**, or email <gargoyle@selway.umt.edu>

Back by Popular Demand

The NCDDR is in the final stages of updating the Rehabilitation Research & Training Center (RRTC) poster. This year the poster is larger, 24 x 36 inches, easier to read and designed to fit a standard frame. We've categorized the RRTCs according to NIDRR's Long-Range Plan research priorities: Employment Outcomes, Health and Function, Independent Living and Community Integration, Associated Disability Research Areas and Capacity Building for Rehabilitation Research Training. The research priorities will make it easy to find RRTCs working in these five focus areas. The NCDDR is also developing an RRTC brochure as an alternative format of the poster.

Look for the poster and brochure in your project mailbox late this summer.

How To Contact The National Center For The Dissemination Of Disability Research

Call Us
1-800-266-1832 or 512-476-6861 V/TT
8 A.M.–NOON and 1 P.M.–5 P.M. C.T.
Mon.–Fri. (except holidays) or
record a message 24 hr./day

Explore Our Web Site
http://www.ncddr.org/

E-mail Us
admin@ncddr.org

Write Us
National Center for the
Dissemination of Disability Research
Southwest Educational
Development Laboratory
211 East Seventh Street, Suite 400
Austin, Texas 78701-3281

Visit Us
In downtown Austin, Texas 4th floor,
Southwest Tower, Brazos at 7th St.
8 A.M.–NOON and 1 P.M.–5 P.M. C.T.
Mon.–Fri. (except holidays)

Fax Us
512-476-2286

An electronic version of *The Research Exchange*, Vol. 5, No. 2 is available on the Internet at URL <http://www.ncddr.org/researchexchange/>

The *Research Exchange* is available in alternate formats upon request.

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Research Exchange

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formats upon request.

SEDL

Southwest Educational
Development Laboratory

NIDRR

National Institute on Disability
and Rehabilitation Research

Grantees Implement Marketing Concepts

Concepts of social marketing and market research were introduced in *The Research Exchange*, Volume 5, Numbers 1 and 2. We typically think about *marketing* in commercial terms, with a goal of increased sales. The purpose of social marketing is to obtain a benefit for the target audience, with a "bottom line" of behavior change. Market research techniques serve a unique purpose and can help us learn about the projected user, or target audience, and their specific needs and preferences.

The purpose of applying marketing techniques is to increase awareness and utilization of the information produced through NIDRR-funded research, by ensuring that information is available to target audiences in appropriate formats. Strategies for disseminating information should be outlined in a marketing plan that responds to the needs of identified potential users.

The NCDDR invited NIDRR grantees to share their experiences with the use of marketing and market research techniques and strategies in their dissemination activities. In this issue we present reports from a variety of projects, although we were not able to present all the submissions we received. The types of activities and audiences may give grantees ideas of what has worked for others and could be useful in dissemination planning. Some of these activities are conducted in coordination with other grantees (for example, the Model Spinal Cord Injury System projects). Others demonstrate collaboration with a variety of stakeholder groups, for different purposes.

Submissions from the following NIDRR grantee representatives are included in this issue:

Lesley Hudson and *Mitch Fillhaber* from the **Shepherd Center**. Lesley serves as Chair of the Dissemination Committee of the *Model Spinal Cord Injury System* (MSCIS) projects and presents an overview of joint MSCIS dissemination activities and planning. Mitch is Vice President for Marketing and Managed Care at the Shepherd Center and discusses the importance of research and how its utilization can be expanded.

Molly Follette Story of the **Center for Universal Design at North Carolina State University**. She is Principal Investigator of a Field-Initiated Project, *Promoting the Practice of Universal Design*, and describes the project's marketing strategies.

To Market or Not To Market?

Marketing is quickly becoming an essential component of an effective and impactful project effort.

The past two issues of *The Research Exchange* (Vol. 5, No. 1 and 2) have focused on major concepts of market research literature and practice. These issues have attempted to paint parallels between the work of NIDRR grantees and the role that marketing plays in the customer-driven real world. In addition, they have described strategies to extend current grant activities to include market research data gathering to assist you in more effective outreach planning and implementation.

In our current Information Age, the time is past to consider *if* the "fruits" of our publicly-funded labors should be marketed to those groups that are the targeted and intended beneficiaries of our efforts. It is the case that we must be concerned with how well our dissemination strategies are reaching those audiences. Time is past when one can argue that "one size fits all" when it comes to how we conduct, package, and make our information available to very different target audiences. In other words, there is an expectation that our information—often, our major project outcome—will produce benefits. While those benefits may be displayed in many ways for a variety of potential target audiences, there is still an expectation that our research outcomes will reach and be able to benefit those who could be positively affected.

Even if unplanned, marketing principles affect your dissemination and utilization outcomes. If you develop written materials, recipients will compare and appraise their impressions of attractiveness, user-friendliness, and the extent to which they are "drawn into" the information. If, for example, your project has developed and maintains a Web site, it is not possible for viewers to ignore their impressions of the Web site's graphic and text components, the ease of navigating the site, the nature and value of the information you have to share, and their enthusiasm to return.

Marketing techniques provide valuable tools that can help all of us improve our dissemination and utilization outcomes. Marketing is quickly becoming an essential component of an effective and impactful project effort. The application of marketing research techniques and related marketing concepts can be considered to be on a continuum ranging from high to low. Your project's dissemination and related marketing efforts are somewhere on that continuum.

This issue of *The Research Exchange* highlights some examples from actual NIDRR grantee experience, that can be found on the "marketing continuum." Each grantee has demonstrated ways in which selected marketing principles mentioned in the past two issues of *The Research Exchange* can and are being used within their project's dissemination activities. We want to thank to all those grantees who worked with us in creating this issue.

John D. Westbrook, Ph.D.
Director, NCDDR

NIDRR grantee representatives included in this issue

Melinda Mast and *Joan Sweeney*, Project Co-Directors for *The Development of an Individualized Marketing Strategy for Job Development for People with Severe Disabilities*, a Field-Initiated Project of **United Cerebral Palsy Associations, Inc. (UCP)**. They describe the project's goals and the use of market research as a strategy to achieve them.

Ken Gerhart, Research Manager, **Craig Hospital**. He describes a successful process of dissemination of information to consumers via *Marketing Health Promotion, Wellness, and Risk Information to Persons with Spinal Cord Injuries Living in the Community*, a Field-Initiated Project.

Joseph P. Lane, Project Director, and *Douglas J. Usiak*, Director of Dissemination, of **The University at Buffalo's** *RERC on Technology Transfer (T²RERC)*. They discuss the RERC's dissemination strategy for utilization by working directly with specific stakeholder groups.

# How the Model SCI System Manages Its Dissemination Plan

by Lesley M. Hudson, M.A., Co-Director, Georgia Regional SCI Care System, Shepherd Center, Atlanta, Georgia, and MSCIS Dissemination Committee Chair

The 1995-2000 cycle of the Model SCI System Program soon comes to an end, and the 2000-2005 cycle will be gearing up. Project Directors of the 18 funded sites meet biannually in Washington to touch base with NIDRR staff, get updates on new agency initiatives, and make system decisions on important issues. Since the goal of the system is to replicate the core requirements of the model care delivery system in each location, it is imperative that the directors of the projects stay in close touch with each other.

One of the committees working within this directors' group is the Dissemination Committee. Chaired by Lesley M. Hudson, M.A., the committee is charged with monitoring all current dissemination efforts for the system, and for creating new and innovative ways to get the word out to the field. In an age of burgeoning technological advancements, the committee has embraced several opportunities to extend the reach of the system worldwide.

> *In an age of burgeoning technological advancements, the [Dissemination] Committee has embraced several opportunities to extend the reach of the system worldwide.*

Here are several of the ongoing efforts in dissemination that are currently in place, or will be online before the end of this calendar year:

hppt://www.ncddr.org/rpp/hf/hfdw/mscis/
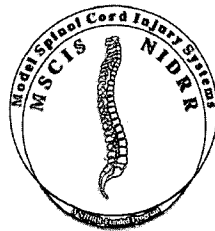
1. **MSCIS Web site:** The NCDDR has created a Web site for the Model SCI System (MSCIS). It contains significant information about the system, with hot links to the individual Web sites of the 18 current members. The address is:
   http://www.ncddr.org/rpp/hf/ hfdw/mscis/

2. **Bibliography:** A current bibliography of all refereed publications by staff of the model SCI system facilities is in the final stages of preparation for inclusion in a new Web site. It will be searchable and contains all articles, chapters, books, and other peer reviewed publications that have been written by individuals who have been, or are now part of the Model SCI System. For more information on this bibliography, contact Mary Call, R.N. at the Philadelphia model SCI system at (215) 955-6579.

3. **Compendium:** A compendium of all educational resources and oral presentations by staff of the model SCI system facilities has been managed by staff at The Institute for Rehabilitation and Research (TIRR) in Houston for over a decade. It is available for purchase in its entirety, and is also searchable via the internet. Contact Jan LeBlanc at (713) 797-5940 for more information.

4. ***Archives of Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation:*** In November of 1999, a special issue of the Archives was published, written completely by staff of the Model SCI System. Volume 80, No. 11, entitled: "Spinal Cord Injury, Current Research Outcomes from the Model Spinal Cord Injury Care Systems" features 22 articles on epidemiology, medical complications, managed care, and psychosocial issues. All information is sourced in the database for the system, housed at the National Spinal Cord Injury Statistical Center (NSCISC) at the University of Alabama at Birmingham. Published monthly by W.B. Saunders Company, single issues of the Archives are available for $24.00 by writing the publisher at 6277 Sea Harbor Drive, Orlando, FL 32887-4800. The contents are indexed in: Index Medicus/MEDLINE; Excerpta Medica/EMBASE; Current Contents/Clinical Medicine; Science Citation Index; Citation Alert; BIOSIS; and CINAHL.

The current thinking among the group is that the MSCIS Web site will be a good resource for patients. The principal collaboration among the Model SCI System participants is the compendium of educational resources that is compiled at TIRR, and much of that is geared toward patient and family education.

For the Model SCI System, sharing the information that has been amassed since its inception in 1971 to improve the knowledge in the field is a key goal. In the next cycle, the dissemination efforts listed here are expected to be expanded, and additional formats will be brought online in the effort to provide the current, most comprehensive research and clinical experience available to the practitioners who treat individuals with spinal cord injury.

Getting the Most from Research Information

by Mitch Fillhaber, Vice President of Marketing and Managed Care, Shepherd Center, Atlanta, Georgia

In Volume 5, Number 1 of *The Research Exchange,* the content was devoted to encouraging researchers to adopt marketing strategies to improve the dissemination and utilization of NIDRR-funded research. In my role as the vice president of marketing and managed care for one of the most specialized "catastrophic care" hospitals in the country, I view the dissemination of research as an essential part of our differentiation strategy, an opportunity to improve benefit plan design for patients with catastrophic injury and illness, and an opportunity to expand continuums of care in response to what the research tells us about the needs of our patients.

Since I have primary responsibility for negotiating managed care and other types of contracts for our facility, it is clear that there is very low awareness of Model System research among payors. As a result, there is little interest in channeling patients to those facilities based on assumptions that investments in research lead to better outcomes. There is enormous opportunity to market collective Model System research to health care medical directors, case managers and quality management staff. This can be especially important for impacting payment decisions and the willingness to go "out of contract" for services that have proven to be effective in reducing post-discharge complications or, in some other way, to optimize the dollars available for acute care and rehabilitation.

One suggestion for marketing research to payors is the development of a *research day* educational program that includes tracks for physicians and

clinical staff. The goal is to present the results of 25 years of Model System research results that can be translated into a variety of economic benefits for plans, their enrollees and corporate clients. Another idea is the development of a *clinical research digest* that can be published two to four times per year and distributed along with facility outcomes information to payors as well as business and industry.

Today, it is common for health care providers to post research information on Web sites. This is a great first step to educating visitors about the role of research in the effort to achieve more effective outcomes. Another is to build a base of subscribers in the media and among referral and payor contacts in order to provide regular updates via electronic mail.

One way to target the dissemination of research is to focus on improving the care offered to catastrophic care patients at referring hospitals prior to transfer. Enhancing their understanding of clinical protocols that have increased function and reduced disability allows patients to enter the rehabilitation phase more quickly and avoid delays due to medical complications. Many practitioners are probably not aware that many protocols used today were developed through MSCIS research.

Research findings that have immediate and/or long-term implications on the quality of life of patients should be managed by a facility's media relations professionals who actively market media outlets with related stories. Drug and device manufacturers have obviously had excellent success in encouraging the rapid adoption and reimbursement of new drugs and procedures by creating media interest about new drugs and their potential benefits.

Research trends indicated an increase in pressure sores among Model System patients after discharge as a result of shorter lengths of stay. This has led Shepherd Center to focus some fundraising efforts to help support the new Marcus Bridge Program which will assist patients in achieving a successful

> *I view the dissemination of research as an essential part of our differentiation strategy, an opportunity to improve benefit plan design for patients with catastrophic injury and illness, and an opportunity to expand continuums of care....*

readjustment to their communities for up to a year after injury. This new service will be written into all contracts and, at a minimum, will create the expectation that it is part of a patient's "treatment" at our facility. Research and clinical trials have also become a major factor in the decision for another large group of patients, those with Multiple Sclerosis, to receive treatment at Shepherd Center.

We've also noticed an increase in the importance that research seems to play in the decision process of patients and their families who are considering options for rehabilitation. Although their curiosity is initially focused on *cure* research, many relatives who evaluate rehabilitation facilities for their loved ones are beginning to ask more general questions about the research we conduct in our Model System programs. Being able to respond to questions and refer people to groups focusing on *the cure* helps establish the Model System as the predominant experts in the field, not simply presenting the MSCIS research agenda. Perhaps over time, audiences such as health care medical directors, case managers, and patients and their families will recognize that the commitment of our organizations transcends simply providing patient care in the acute phase of a lifelong process of adjustment.
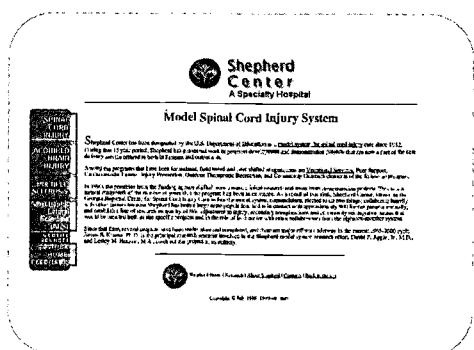
Marketing Related Activities Conducted As Part of "Promoting the Practice of Universal Design," a Field-Initiated Project

by Molly Follette Story, Principal Investigator, Center for Universal Design, North Carolina State University

Year One

Research was conducted with three constituency groups: consumers, product designers, and marketing managers.

- **Consumers.** A series of three focus groups were conducted with a total of 28 consumers to assess five draft versions of Universal Design Performance Measures under development.

- **Designers.** A series of telephone interviews were conducted with 21 practicing product designers to assess the draft Performance Measures and to determine designers' level of interest in them.

- **Marketers.** A series of telephone interviews were conducted with 10 marketing managers to probe for feedback on the value to industry of a universal design product evaluation system and a proposed universal design "seal of approval."

Many of the marketing professionals interviewed had never heard of universal design and so a fair amount of education was required at the beginning of the conversations. The marketers provided input regarding the perceived benefits of and problems with Universal Design Performance Measures, as well as the perceived value of, major concerns regarding, and suggestions for promoting, a universal design "seal of approval."

> *Many of the marketing professionals interviewed had never heard of universal design and so a fair amount of education was required at the beginning of the conversations.*

Year Two

Two sets of Universal Design Performance Measures were developed, one set for consumers to use in evaluating products for their own use, and another set for practicing professional product designers to use in developing products for diverse consumer markets.

The Performance Measures were tested with 60 consumer households and 18 designer households. A full report of market research activities related to usability testing and survey was included in *The Research Exchange,* Volume 5, Number 2.

Year Three

The final year of this project will involve significant marketing and dissemination activities. This year, we will pay particular attention to achieving these three goals:

Goal 1. Improve consumers' ability to recognize universal design.

Goal 2. Improve designers' ability to meet the needs of a diverse consumer base.

Goal 3. Recognize and support industry efforts to successfully market universal design.

Marketing Related Activities Conducted As Part Of "Promoting The Practice Of Universal Design," a Field-Initiated Project
continued from page 5

Achieving the first two goals will require a large amount of direct dissemination through a variety of channels, such as:

- Press releases;

- Interviews with entertainment media (e.g., television);

- Presentations at professional conferences (e.g., Industrial Designers Society of America, RESNA, Human Factors and Ergonomics Society, Product Development and Marketing Association, American Research Foundation);

- Popular press articles (e.g., *Wall Street Journal's* "Design and Environment" column, *Business Week, Popular Science*);

- Journal articles (e.g., *Innovation, Ergonomics in Design, Journal of Marketing, Journal of Product Innovation Management*);

- Consumer magazine articles (e.g., *New Mobility, We, Exceptional Parent, Modern Maturity, Mouth, One Step Ahead*);

- Consumer association networks (e.g., *American Association of Retired Persons, American Federation for the Blind, Self Help for Hard of Hearing Persons, United Cerebral Palsy, Paralyzed Veterans of America, Arthritis Foundation, National Council on Independent Living, American Occupational Therapy*

Association) and Internet web sites (*We Media, Disability News, Half the Planet*);

- Presentations to individual companies.

Achieving the second and third goals will also require the development of new informational materials. Marketing managers will need:

- Information explaining to industry what universal design is and why its adoption is worth pursuing;

- Documented business case studies of successful universal design practice;

- Information on how to conduct market and usability research on more diverse target markets;

- Guidance on how to successfully market universal design without stigmatizing it.

At the same time, professional product designers will need:

- Informational materials they can use to advocate for universal design within their own companies;

- The designers' version of the Universal Design Performance Measures presented in a format that is convenient and customizable;

- Numerous universal design exemplars drawn from diverse industries.

The second and third goals will also need innovative programs to best promote the practice of universal design. The project will explore:

- Producing promotional give-aways (such as posters, pocket reference cards, computer mouse pads) to keep information about universal design in front of practitioners;

- Infusing the Universal Design Performance Measures into existing product evaluation and recognition programs;

- Developing a universal design achievement award program but not a "seal of approval" program.

The Development of an Individualized Marketing Strategy for Job Development for People with Severe Disabilities

by Melinda Mast and Joan Sweeney Project Co-Directors, United Cerebral Palsy Associations, Inc.

Over the last 20 years, supported employment has proven to be a successful means to employment for thousands of people. However, the number of people with severe physical and communication disabilities who are employed because of supported employment remains low, less than 10% (Wehman, 1995). United Cerebral Palsy Associations, Inc. (UCP) proposes to develop a new product to be used by people with severe and multiple disabilities, including physical and communication disabilities, and their representatives, as appropriate, in order to assist such individuals in securing employment. This three-year development activity is addressing the following goals:

A. Develop a product for use by individuals with severe multiple disabilities to increase their functional capability for individualized representation and marketing to potential employers, as well as by employment representatives as appropriate. The product will include an Individualized Employment Portfolio, a training manual for using the product and a format for personalizing the approach, fact sheets, a brochure and photographs.

B. Test market and survey the materials with employers in a minimum of 45 cities nationwide. Get feedback, modify and finalize the product based on the test market feedback.

C. Disseminate the individualized Employment Presentation Portfolio through training, presentations, and publications.

This project utilizes marketing in two ways: First, to develop a product for people with severe disabilities to use when marketing themselves to employers; Second, to use a test market research method to determine the products ability to successfully assist job development.

Data have shown it takes more time and it takes a different approach to employers to successfully facilitate employment for people with severe multiple disabilities (Mast, West, & Johnson, 1996). People who have severe and multiple disabilities, including physical and communication disabilities, encounter an additional barrier to employment in that they have difficulty representing and marketing themselves and have a greater likelihood of needing assistance with their individualized representation (Callahan & Garner, 1997). A portfolio prototype will be developed and test marketed across the country with numerous employers. After completion of this project, the portfolio prototype may then be individualized to represent the person seeking employment. This new product will allow customized representation through an *Employment Presentation Portfolio* and will serve as a unique tool in assisting with individualized representation and marketing to employers.

A test market research component was developed so that feedback from employers could be used in the improvement of the product. It is necessary to get feedback from potential employers on the product in order to develop the best tool possible. The following steps were incorporated in order to attain this valuable feedback. The test market research has two phases. Six focus groups are conducted in different parts of the country in the initial phase. These focus groups are comprised of ten employers with hiring responsibilities and are facilitated by supported employment professionals who have both group facilitation experience and knowledge of best practices in supported employment. Each facilitator is given a [stipend] or their efforts and to help

http://www.ucpa.org/

defray any costs they may incur.

During the focus groups, the employers are shown a videotaped demonstration of the portfolio prototype presentation. They are then asked to complete a survey questionnaire that was developed by a panel of experts in the field, including a research specialist from Virginia Commonwealth University (VCU). The questionnaire is comprised of a page-by-page critique of the portfolio prototype, as well as questions regarding overall impressions on the effectiveness of the portfolio prototype. The survey results are in the process of being compiled by the research specialist from VCU. Once the compilation is complete changes will be made to the portfolio prototype according to the feedback attained from the focus group surveys.

> *By completing the test market research we hope to gain information from employers that will assist potential employees in creating their own individualized career portfolio.*

The updated version of the portfolio prototype will then be taken through the second phase of the test market research. This phase utilizes an individualized approach in gaining feedback from employers. The need for participants to help complete the second phase of the test market research was advertised in a national supported employment newsletter. The response was huge. Respondents were asked to fill out an application, then applicants were narrowed down to forty five participants from all over the country based on set criteria. These participants will be responsible for conducting ten individual portfolio prototype presentations with employers from their community. These employers will then be asked to give their feedback using a survey similar to the focus group survey. The participants will also be given a stipend for each survey completed. The 450 survey results will be compiled by VCU. The portfolio will again be changed according to the feedback received.

By completing the test market research we hope to gain information from employers that will assist potential employees in creating their own individualized career portfolio using the prototype developed. The portfolio prototype will be one of the first job development tools ever developed using feedback from employers. The finished product will be disseminated through presentations at national conferences and announcements in UCP's newsletter and Web site.

A Process for Turning Research Information— and Information About Research— Into Something of Meaning for Consumers

by Ken Gerhart, Research Manager, Craig Hospital,
Marketing Health Promotion, Wellness, and Risk Information to Persons with Spinal Cord Injuries Living in the Community

Researchers typically share and disseminate their findings at professional conferences and venues, in the scientific journals of their field, and in reports to their institutions, sponsors, and funding agencies. Too often, consumers— those who actually participate in the research—are overlooked as potential information recipients.

Two recent NIDRR funded projects at Craig Hospital specifically targeted consumers—in our case, persons with spinal cord injuries—for an on-going, focused dissemination effort. We found a huge, hungry, and grateful audience.

The first project began in 1993 (Rehabilitation Research & Training Center on Aging with Spinal Cord Injury) and the second continues today (Marketing Health Promotion, Wellness, and Risk Information to Persons with Spinal Cord Injuries Living in the Community. Together, these two projects have distributed thousands of informational brochures on a wide range of disability-specific topics, to people with spinal cord injuries living in the community. The success of this dissemination effort far surpassed our expectations; in hindsight, we've tried to re-construct what we did, so that we, and others, might try to duplicate this effort.

First, *we started with two assumptions—* both of which proved to be correct:

- Consumers with spinal cord injuries— and presumably, people with other types of disabilities—are looking for information. Though there is no shortage of information out there, good, accurate disability-specific information is in short supply. During in-patient rehabilitation programs consumers are barraged with an overwhelming torrent of information,

but information that they see as being *relevant to them* diminishes quickly once they return to their communities.

- Consumers are intelligent and discriminating. They know what kind of information they need. They are able to read and understand scientific information, but they are frustrated with the frequent difficulty in *digesting* confusing and contradictory bits of information, and in *extracting meaning* and *relevance* from research reports.

Both of these assumptions were validated by the response to our dissemination program—as well as by comments at a consumer dissemination conference held in the late 1990s. Consumers there criticized researchers for failing to share research findings that the researchers claimed were "preliminary," "based on small samples," or "not yet replicated to the researchers' satisfaction." "Tell us anyway," they said. "Tell us the limitations and the caveats and let us determine if the information is useful to us."

Second, *we involved consumers in our dissemination plan.* This was done at multiple levels:
- We used focus groups to identify what types of information people with spinal cord injuries in the community wanted. We asked them what formats they wanted their information in; we even had them help us design and choose our logo.
- We then involved consumers in evaluating our products. When products were still in the draft stage—but after physicians, clinicians, researchers and others "in-the-know" had reviewed them for technical and

scientific accuracy—we asked consumers for their input. We used focus groups, patient education classes, in-patients who had a free hour, outpatients waiting for an appointment, family members, etc. Together, we read through the materials being tested one or two sentences at a time and then discussed what we had just read: Was the information useful? Did it make sense? Was it readable? How could it be clearer? What questions did it leave unanswered? Depending on the amount of revision that was needed, we did this a second and even a third time. We gave each consumer a cash honorarium to thank them for their time.

Third, *we picked a consistent format for our topics. Physically,* they all looked the same, to increase their recognizability. Perhaps even more important, their content and format was similar, too. All were highly focused, enabling one topic to be covered in fair depth, without expanding too much beyond our self imposed 1000-1500 word limit. We introduced the topic with a short example, case study, or other description of the problem. We then discussed what we knew about that topic—and what we didn't know. We did something researchers typically hesitate to do: we interpreted information for them. We tried to as clearly as possible tell the reader "What all this means..." We learned that consumers especially appreciate a "translation" of a study's limitations: it puts what often seem to be contradictions into perspective. Finally, when possible, we ended each topic with a discussion on how to prevent or treat the problem and where to look for additional information. Incidentally—

we did not "dumb down" our products, but we did use familiar language, we tried to explain medical words and jargon, and we tried to help readers find the "meaning" in what they were reading.

Fourth, *we kept our products simple and cheap.* We made our own camera-ready copies and had them mass-produced by a copy-house. We designed them so they could be filed in a three-ring binder for future reference—or, read once and thrown in the trash. We concentrated on content, and didn't destroy the first 1000 copies when we found a typo after the print job had been completed! There was no great loss if a particular brochure was not successful; there was no great expense if a successful one had to be re-printed. Perhaps more important, there was no pressure on the reader to worry about saving our materials, not "wasting" them, etc. They were there to be used, and used freely, with no strings attached.

Fifth, *we relied*—inadvertently and "advertently"—*on already existing venues* for getting word out about our brochures. We took them to meetings and conferences; we deposited them in our own outpatient clinic. Our patient educator used them in her teaching program. We promoted them in our grant project's newsletter. Another dissemination effort of our grant project was to provide quarterly health information columns to several journals targeting people with spinal cord injuries. From time to time we used these columns to let readers know about the availability of our brochures

> *Consumers with spinal cord injuries—and presumably, people with other types of disabilities—ARE looking for information.*

Craig Hospital

Caring exclusively for patients with spinal cord and brain injuries.

Denver, Colorado
303-789-8000

Referral and Admission
Treatment Programs
Your Health and Wellness
Research Information
SCI Health Assessment
Employment
Donations & Volunteering
Alumni and Movin' On
Therapeutic Recreation
Prevention Information
What's New
Sites of Interest
Contact Information
Tell Us About You
Site Map
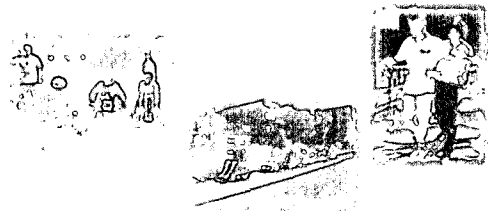
Craig Hospital in Denver has long been recognized as a premier national center of excellence in the specialty rehabilitation and research for patients with spinal cord and brain injury. Craig has treated more than 23,000 patients since 1956 — more than any other single facility in the world — and has been rated every year in the Top Ten Rehabilitation Hospitals by *US News and World Report* since the ratings began. In 1999, patients came to Craig from 44 states and several countries to take advantage of our expertise and experience.

Our Commitment

Our exclusive dedication to patients with spinal cord injury and traumatic brain injury will remain constant, as will our commitment to value, excellence, and caring. We will continue to set the standard for quality patient outcomes and service, and as always, help patients and their families achieve their greatest possible levels of independence.

We know that when we assist patients to become independent and productive, it is in their best interest, as well as the best interest of their employer, the insurance company, taxpayers, and society as a whole. We will also be a resource to our former patients and to the professional community through publications, presentations, and consultations.
http://www.craighospital.org/

http://www.craighospital.org/

and other materials as well. And, we loaded electronic copies of each topic onto our own web site.

We truly don't know which of these strategies resulted in the biggest pay-off. But as a result of this multi-pronged approach, we saw almost 15,000 brochures disseminated. In addition, we responded to requests from other hospitals—in the US and Canada—for camera-ready copies so they could print their own mass quantities. Other hospitals, universities and research projects linked their web sites to the health information found on ours, and we gave reprint permission so our journal columns could be reproduced in American journals and newsletters targeting *other* disability groups, and in one or two foreign counties' journals targeting people with spinal cord injuries.

What advice would we offer? Without consciously doing so, we used a marketing approach to dissemination. These are the principles that seemed to work for us:

- Know your audience.

- Find out what they want.

- Find out what other already-existing materials, magazines, and so forth, your intended audience uses. Approach those journals about working together. Most editors are anxious for good content.

- When you write for consumers, don't hesitate to provide interpretation, meaning, and implications. If your findings are based on limited numbers or small studies, tell your readers that so they can draw their own conclusions.

- Make dissemination easy on yourself—go for content rather than pizzazz; go for simple, easy to produce and distribute pieces rather than glitz.

- And—use multiple formats and media to disseminate. Each tends to foster and bolster the other.

An RERC's Dissemination Strategy for Utilization

by Joseph P. Lane, Project Director, and Douglas J. Usiak, Director of Dissemination, RERC on Technology Transfer, The University at Buffalo

The Rehabilitation Engineering Research Center on Technology Transfer (T2RERC) defined its mission statement as: *"Advance methods, technologies and products, through collaboration with all stakeholders, to improve assistive technology devices and services."* Our mission statement includes collaboration with "stakeholders," because we recognized that any transfer requires a series of transactions, each between two parties, as a technology is transformed into a new and novel product.

Our working model of technology transfer defines five stakeholder groups involved in this transformation process,[1] as shown in Table 1.

Table 1. Technology Transfer Stakeholders

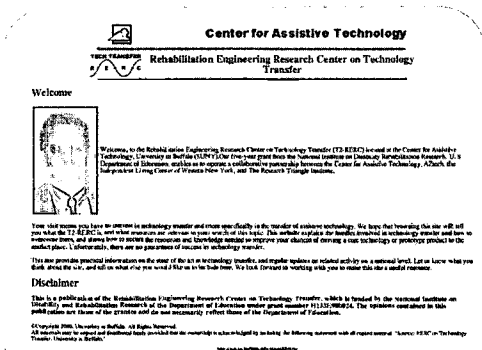| Stakeholder Group Name	Example Members of Stakeholder Group
Technology Producers	Researchers in academic, federal or corporate laboratories, and independent inventors.
Technology Consumers	Entrepreneurs, Intellectual property brokers, government agencies, corporate manufacturers.
Product Producers	Corporate manufacturers, distributors, value-added retailers.
Product Consumers	End-users, family members, professional service providers.
Resource Providers	Government agencies, private insurance companies, technology transfer intermediaries.

Dissemination Framework

To ensure our dissemination program results in the effective communication and utilization of our information, we designed a dissemination framework targeting each and every stakeholder group.

Dissemination Activities & Product Categories

Our dissemination activities applied the five categories of characteristics for effective dissemination, authored by the National Center for the Dissemination of Disability Research (Table 2).[2]

Table 2. Five Categories of Effective Dissemination

Category	Characteristic
User	User's readiness to change; format and level of information needed, level of contextual information needed, perceived relevance to own needs; dissemination media preferred; information sources trusted.
Source	Perceived competence; credibility of experience; credibility of motive; sensitivity to user concerns; relationship to other sources trusted by user.
Content	Credibility of research and development methodology; credibility of outcomes; comprehensiveness of outcomes; utility and relevance for users; capacity to be described in terms understandable to users; cost effectiveness; research design and procedures.
Context	Relationship between outcomes and existing knowledge or products; current issues in the field; competing knowledge or products; general economic climate.
Medium	Physical capacity to reach intended users; time lines of access; accessibility and ease of use and user friendliness; flexibility, reliability, credibility, cost effectiveness; clarity and attractiveness of the information "package."

Center for Assistive Technology
Rehabilitation Engineering Research Center on Technology Transfer

[1] Lane, J.P. (1999). Understanding technology transfer. *Assistive Technology.* 11, 5-19.
[2] Westbrook, J. & Boethel, M. (1996). General characteristics of effective dissemination and utilization [Online]. Available: http://www.ncddr.org/du/characteristics.html

We also used eight categories of dissemination products, identified by the NCDDR among grantee products reported to NARIC, to ensure our plan addressed all categories (see Table 3).[3]

Table 3. Eight Categories of Dissemination Products

Category	Characteristic
Journals	Articles or special issues.
Mediated Materials	Videotape, audiotape, database, on-line pages and CD-ROM.
Reports	Annual or final.
General Awareness	Abstracts, brochures or newsletters.
Publications	Books, chapters, papers, conference proceedings or technical reports.
Training Materials	Curricula, handbooks, guidelines modules, workbooks.
Devices	Inventions, prototypes, commercial products.
Unclassified	Radio interviews, presentations, surveys, discussion groups.

Stakeholders as Dissemination Targets

Effective communication requires that all materials be developed with the needs of the recipient stakeholder groups in mind, and that such materials reflect any diversity within each of the stakeholder groups. Our experience indicated that all five stakeholder groups have significant internal diversity. Therefore, we knew we had to tailor our dissemination materials to communicate effectively.

The dissemination plan for each stakeholder group considered the most appropriate format and venue to effectively reach the intended audience. Our dissemination materials are designed to address the "how to utilize" perspectives of the target audience, and be delivered in formats most familiar to each stakeholder group. We expect to achieve high utilization by the audiences, because the dissemination material focuses on the methods, processes and outcomes of technology transfer. They also convey to audiences the tools for facilitating and improving technology transfer, to ensure that the transfer

results in products with improved functional benefits for the end-users.

We derived our dissemination plan for each stakeholder group, based on our involvement with them over a prior five year period. Conducting research on targeted markets can provide a similar level of understanding about an audience of interest.

Technology Producers

The stakeholder group Technology Producers includes lay inventors tinkering in garages, skilled scientists and technologists pursuing spin-off projects, researchers in rehabilitation engineering centers, and clinicians testing modifications to existing products. Although their backgrounds and expertise vary, most Technology Producers apply structured procedures during the development process. Our dissemination materials use plain English supplemented by footnotes, appendices and references to more comprehensive topic treatments. The utilization outcome is Technology Producers with more information and awareness about the entire technology transfer process, the points of contact to effectively evaluate their assistive device ideas, and the resources available to

identify Technology Consumers and Product Producers.

Technology Consumers

Technology Consumer stakeholders are another diverse group. Entities that acquire and protect technologies developed internally and externally include private sector manufacturers, federal laboratories, and government agencies. Technology agents and patent attorneys also acquire and protect technology but with the expectation of adding value and then re-selling the technology to a company or government agency. The manufacturers that are Technology Consumers range from small machine shops in leased space, to multi-national corporations with far-flung factories and sophisticated supply channels. Regardless of size or scope, Technology Consumers speak the languages of engineering, industrial design and business management. Our materials for Technology Consumers reflect the issues most relevant to their work. The utilization outcome is having them apply our information about optional actions, to the trade-offs they face when making decisions.

49

An RERC's Dissemination Strategy for Utilization

Product Producers

The Product Producer stakeholder group is almost exclusively private, for-profit corporations. Some not-for-profit corporations produce products but typically in very small numbers or in customized forms. Product Producers include companies with internal manufacturing capabilities, and some distributors or value-added retailers who contract for domestic or overseas manufacturing. Our corporate partner AZtech Inc. distributes its own newsletter to over five hundred Product Producers in the assistive technology industry. Product Producers are concerned with product lines, inventories, cost of goods sold, price points, shipping weights, packaging dimensions—basically any topic related to their core business. Our dissemination materials for

> *By knowing what is useful, interesting or redundant, we tailor our content and format to best communicate with each stakeholder group.... we communicate with them from a common ground.*

Product Producers in the assistive technology market address mark-ups, profit margins, point of sale issues and customer support. In many cases the Product Producers are closely linked to the Technology Consumers, so we disseminate through the same trade/industry channels to reach the majority of the Product Producers. The utilization outcome is increased awareness about the market opportunities and competitive advantage available through technology transfer, and about the external resources and intermediaries available in the private sector.

Product Consumers

Product Consumer stakeholders encompass end users with disabilities, family members, professional care providers and physicians who prescribe devices. Our dissemination materials primarily focus on the functional value of the products described, particularly in comparison to other products available. The materials describe the Product Consumer's role in the technology transfer process, particularly in how to effectively communicate unmet needs through the demand pull process. The utilization outcome is better informed Product Consumers actively participating in defining new or improved product features and functions.

Utilization starts with accessibility. Our dissemination materials are prepared in accessible formats to reach the Product Consumers. These formats include print, ASCII text file, Braille, audiotape, videotape with open captions, and accessible World Wide Web format. The materials stress the role of Product Consumers in the technology transfer process, and the resulting product's value to their daily life.

Resource Providers

The fifth stakeholder group, Resource Providers, are government agencies, insurance companies, or technology transfer intermediaries providing resources and expertise. The Tech Transfer RERC is considered a resource provider. They are primarily interested in issues of public policy, cost vs. benefit, quality of life improvement, and outcome measures for the constituents they serve. Dissemination materials will address the social, economic and political realities in which they conduct their business on behalf of individuals, corporate clients, states and the nation.

Technology transfer intermediaries include university technology transfer offices, federal laboratory Offices of Research and Technology Applications (ORTA's), the Department of Veteran's Affairs Technology Transfer Section. NIDRR's Tech Transfer RERC will also be an intermediary. Dissemination materials for these intermediaries include notifications of technologies available for transfer, new product introductions following successful transfer, and contact information for reaching other intermediary entities.

Dissemination vehicles include all those mentioned for the other stakeholders because Resource Providers scan various horizons for opportunities as part of their daily business. We also disseminate on-going information to the Resource Providers annually through targeting mailings of the project's two newsletters which include our annual report. Less formal dissemination venues include telephone, email and World Wide Web postings on an on-going basis. The utilization outcome is increased awareness of funding, technology and product opportunities, to enable these partner intermediaries to facilitate and improve technology transfer.

Dissemination Philosophy

Our dissemination plan is closely linked to our evaluation program since both activities involve all of these stakeholder groups. By knowing what is useful, interesting or redundant, we tailor our content and format to best communicate with each stakeholder group. We rely on the favored literature base and preferred communication channels of each stakeholder group, so that we communicate with them from a common ground. We emphasize various aspects of technology transfer, depending on the expected involvement of each group. For example, Product Producers and consumers are involved in needs analysis and product design, while Technology Producers and consumers are focused on emerging technologies and the methods of research and development.

Technology transfer is an outgrowth of work in many disciplines and fields. Some of our time is spent finding and assimilating the literature from sources outside the field of rehabilitation engineering, such as work conducted in federal laboratories, university programs in other disciplines or in the corporate sector. Our on-going work continues to develop new knowledge through the integration of literature from such sectors and disciplines. It is important to ensure that the content is preserved in the translation from one context and vernacular to another. Successful translation is critical to conducting dissemination with an expectation for effective utilization.

Summary

These projects have shared their reports in an effort to help other grantees who may be exploring ways to use ideas from the field of marketing in their dissemination efforts. The purpose of marketing, when applied to D&U activities, is to make information from research outcomes available and usable by a variety of users with different needs and backgrounds.

Getting to know your audience, a key feature of marketing success, is described in each report. User input is critical in order to design utilization activities to meet the needs of specific users. Many market research techniques are not new and can be used as part of ongoing research projects. Techniques such as surveys, focus groups, and interviews are used by grantees to gather the data about their audiences.

Some of the dissemination activities described in the grantee reports are not new, but they will be made more effective by inviting user input early and throughout the research and dissemination process. Newer and more innovative dissemination can be tested with small groups to ensure the strategy meets the information needs of identified audiences.

To be effective, dissemination must be planned and executed with as much thought and care as any other component of a grantee's overall research project. We hope the information shared in the three issues of Volume 5 give you ideas for using marketing techniques to make dissemination and utilization more effective in current and future NIDRR research.

Who's in the News

NCDDR staff are on the lookout for popular and disability media pieces that present research funded by NIDRR. In this issue, we share news items from **CNN**, **MacWEEK**, **Prime Time Radio (AARP)**, and **Missouri Ruralist**. In addition, **The Exploratorium** in San Francisco is disseminating information from a former grantee's work through a unique exhibition available on the World Wide Web.

Please let us know when an item representing your project appears in the media. Call us or send an email to the NCDDR when your project has an interaction with the media and we will review the piece for inclusion in Who's in the News. You may also use the online form: <http://www.ncddr.org/forms/newsrecognition.html>.

A segment entitled *New Technology to Help Disabled Use U.S. Government Information and Equipment* was aired on **CNN**'s "Science and Technology Week" (April 29, 2000) and again on "Headline News" (May 6, 2000.) The broadcast included an interview with Shelley Popson, Instructional Technology Specialist with NIDDR grantee Vcom3D, Inc. (formerly Seamless Solutions, Inc.) The interview highlighted Vcom3D's SigningAvatar™ software, funded in part by NIDRR under a Small Business Innovative Research grant.

CNN's **Marsha Walton**, Producer, developed the story after Vcom3D took part in a CNN story on the "Section 508" exhibits at the FOSE Conference in Washington, DC, April 18-20, 2000. FOSE <www.FOSE.com> (Federal Office Systems Exposition) is the largest information technology exposition serving the government marketplace.

Signing Avatar utilizes 3D animated characters to increase the accessibility of the Internet for the Deaf community. Signing Avatar has a vocabulary of 3000 English words/concepts and 30 facial expressions. A brief description of the story focus and a link to a video clip is available at <http://www.cnn.com/2000/TECH/computing/05/26/disabled.t_t/index.html>.

Vcom3D was also mentioned in MacWEEK in July, highlighting the organization's *Golden Lasso Award* garnered for the best presentation at the annual Web3D RoundUP in New Orleans. Web3D is a high energy showcase for the latest in 3D graphics where participants vote for the best technology and presentation with noisemakers and ping pong balls. Check out the story at <http://macweek.zdnet.com/2000/07/23/0727webroundup.html>. Additional coverage of the presentation, including images, can be found in the 3Dgate on-line magazine at <http://www.3dgate.com/news_and_opinions/000828/0828bdeleeuw.html>.

In addition to its recent CNN and MacWEEK.com fame, Vcom3D was featured in the May, 2000 issue of *Computer Graphics*, which also focused on the Web3D RoundUP and highlighted Vcom3D with a profile of Signing Avatars' technology and benefits. For more information, contact Ed Sims at **eds@vcom3d.com** or 407-737-7309. Visit Vcom3D's Signing Avatar Web site at <http://www.signingavatar.com/>.

On May 4, 2000 **Mike Cuthbert** interviewed Dr. Binh Tran, Academic Director of the RERC on Telerehabilitation, and Ms. Donal Lauderdale, the RERC's Research Operations Manager, for a segment on "Homecare Technologies" for the *Prime Time Radio* show. Dr. Tran and Ms. Lauderdale had given a presentation on SmartHomes as part of the American Association of Retired Person's (AARP) "Connections of Independent Living" week. The interview about the use of technology to allow people to live independently in their homes was played on local public radio stations across the country.

The RERC on Telerehabilitation appeared on Mike Cuthbert's radar screen after Ms. Lauderdale piqued AARP education specialist Robin Ritter's interest in the RERC's work, during the January "Partnerships Conference" in Washington, D.C. For more information

Who's in the News
continued from page 13

contact **Ms. Donal Lauderdale**
at 202-319-5175 or **lauderdale@cua.edu**

Prime Time Radio has a listing of recent shows where you will find a brief description of the interview and a link to download an audio file of the show that aired on May 23, 2000.
<http://www.aarp.org/ontheair/ptrtopics.html>.

[NOTE: RealPlayer is needed to listen to the audio file. You can download a free copy of RealPlayer from the RealNetworks site:
<http://www.real.com/player/>.

Farmers and Arthritis, a project of the Missouri Arthritis Rehabilitation Research and Training Center (MARRTC), is featured in the August 2000 issue of the **Missouri Ruralist**.

With a circulation of 30,000, the magazine goes to farmers who are actively engaged in production, said **Steve Fairchild**, field editor of the magazine. This article in the *Missouri Ruralist* means information on the Farmers and Arthritis Project will go directly to the people who can benefit from it. The Farmers and Arthritis Project is designed to help farmers who have arthritis stay on the job. The need for the project is demonstrated by these figures:

• More than 500,000 agricultural workers have physical disabilities.

• The median age of farmers is 54.3— compared to the median age of all U.S. workers which is 38.7

Through the Project, farmers can receive on-the-farm assessments by physical and occupational therapists to learn how to modify their work or their machinery so they can keep on farming despite any limitations that might stem from arthritis. For more information about the Farmers and Arthritis Project, contact **Karen Funkenbusch**, project coordinator, at **funkenbuschk@missouri.edu**

The *Missouri Ruralist* is one of 36 titles produced by Farm Progress Publications, which is headquartered in Carol Stream, Illinois. For more information, contact **Steve Fairchild** :hild@farmprogress.com

Steven Kurzman, 1997-98 Switzer Merit Fellow, served as an advisor to the Exploratorium, a museum of science, art and human perception in San Francisco, California. *Revealing Bodies* is an exhibition that ran from March 18, 2000 to September 4, 2000.

Ellen Blasiotti, NIDRR's Program Manager for the Switzer fellowships, received a letter from **Melissa Alexander**, Project Director for *Revealing Bodies,* concerning the widespread dissemination of Steve Kurzman's Switzer Fellowship work. Prior to the opening of the exhibition, she wrote:

"The exhibition examines the impact and implications of scientific and medical representations of the human body. It will be a 4,000 sq. ft. mix of newly commissioned art, artifacts, imaging equipment, anatomy models, bio and mechanical prostheses and online exhibits. We will explore how these kinds of images and representations shape culture, scientific understanding, politics, and society."

"Body imaging and representation has long been a subject of discussion and debate in cultural anthropolgy, but the "meat" of this inquiry is often inaccessible to a non-specialist. At the Exploratorium we admire any scientist/artist/other who can make complex and provocative ideas comprehensible, and therefore accessible, to a broad audience. It's not so easy, a unique talent actually!"

"Steve Kurzman....set up a web site that described his work comparing different cultural implications for prosthetics between the U.S. and other countries. This dissemination was created for the non-specialist. I found his site when surfing for the exhibition. Since discovering his web site, we have contacted Mr. Kurzman. He has met with our exhibition staff and will be advising us on texts related to prosthetics and appropriate technology. He has been able to give insights into this field of technology in the US, which will be very valuable in our exhibition label texts. He has also agreed to lend us artifacts and provide us with photographic materials from his research for the exhibition. Additionally, we intend to host a public program and for Mr. Kurzman to speak about this research."

"Perhaps the most important thing for me to bring to your attention is that we anticipate a public audience of 300,000 for the exhibition over a period of six months. We also hope to do a web cast on prosthetics and archive it on our Web site, <http://www.exploratorium.org/>, which is accessed by 2.5 million people annually."

"...So an unintended, but I hope welcome, side effect of your support will be that thousands of people will have direct access to the knowledge gained by Mr. Kurzman's research. We are just thrilled with the window into this issue that he has opened for us....His work will now help us non-specialists find a way to communicate very complex social issues around prosthetics, disability, economics and values to a broad public."

The *Revealing Bodies* exhibition is over but the Web site may be visited at: <http://www.exploratorium.org/bodies/index.html>

Go *Behind the Scenes* at: <http://www.exploratorium.org/bodies/index_behind.html> to find "Cultural anthropologist Steve Kurzman looks at the cultural significance of prosthetic limbs." For more information, check out his *Anthropology and Prosthetics Web* site: <http://www.prosthetics-culture.org/> or write to **Steven Kurzman** at **steven@prosthetics-culture.org**
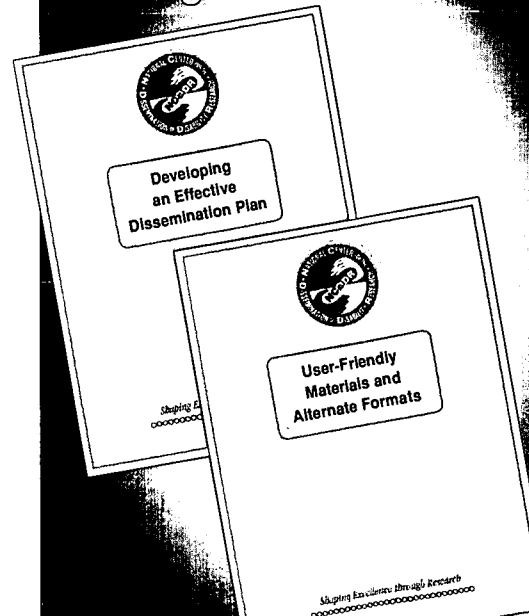
The NCDDR congratulates each of the following NIDRR grantees and staff members. All grantees are encouraged to contact the NCDDR or use the online form at <http://www.ncddr.org/forms/newsrecognition.html> to let NCDDR know if your project or staff have received special recognition, an award or citation, or other special honor. This information will be shared in future issues of *The Research Exchange*.

On October 20, 2000, **Dr. Katherine Seelman**, NIDRR Director, will be honored as the recipient of the *Gold Key Award* from the American Congress of Rehabilitation Medicine at its 77th annual meeting in Hilton Head, South Carolina. The *Gold Key Award* was established in 1932 as a certificate of merit to members of the medical and applied professions who have rendered extraordinary service to the cause of rehabilitation. It is the highest honor given by the Congress. **Dr. Gerben DeJong**, of the NIDRR-grantee National Rehabilitation Hospital, received this prestigious award in 1998 at the 75th ACRM meeting. For more information, contact **Ellen Blasiotti** at **Ellen_Blasiotti@ed.gov**

Georgia Regional Spinal Cord Injury Care System research staff members **Jennifer Coker** and **James S. Krause, Ph.D.** received a *Second Place Poster* award at the American Spinal Injury Association Meeting in Chicago on April 14-16, 2000. The poster was titled: *The Relationship of Alcohol, Drug, and Tobacco Use With Personality in Individuals With Spinal Cord Injury.* (In the past issue we highlighted the First Place Poster awarded to researchers from another NIDRR grantee, the RTC on Secondary Conditions of SCI.) For additional information, contact **Ms. Coker** via email at: **jennifer_coker@shepherd.org**

On April 21, 2000, **WGBH Educational Foundation's Media Access** was named one of five *Finalists* in the Media, Arts & Entertainment category of the *2000 Computerworld Smithsonian Awards.* A panel of distinguished judges selected 51 finalists in 10 categories from a total of 444 laureates, whose work was nominated for an award. This year 39 nominations were submitted in the Media, Arts & Entertainment category.

Media Access was nominated by Mr. Paul F. Liao, President, Panasonic Technologies, Inc. and Chief Technology Officer of Matsushita Electric Corporation of America. Its closed captioning and video description make television, film and digital media more accessible to 37 million Americans with sensory disabilities.

In addition, **CPB/WGBH National Center for Accessible Media's** Web Access Project was named as a *Laureate* in the Education and Academia category. The nomination was submitted by America Online. For additional information, contact **Larry Goldberg**, Director and Principal Investigator, at **larry_goldberg@wgbh.org**

Gregg C. Vanderheiden, Ph.D., received one of the first annual *Ron Mace Designing for the 21st Century Leadership Awards,* presented on Friday, June 16th, 2000 at the Designing for the 21st Century II International Conference on Universal Design in Providence, RI. Named in honor of Ron Mace, FAIA, who died in 1998, the awards recognize those who have worked to make his vision of a universally inclusive society a reality. The award was presented to Dr. Vanderheiden for his "leadership role in promoting action by industry leaders and innovation in government policy." Dr. Vanderheiden is the Director of the Trace Center and Principal Investigator for the **RERC on Information Technology Access** and (with Judy Harkins) the **RERC on Telecommunication Access**. For more information, contact **Kate Vanderheiden** at **vanderk@trace.wisc.edu**

Kristofer Hagglund, Ph.D., was named as one of six recipients of the *Robert Wood Johnson Foundation Health Policy Fellowship* for September, 2000-August, 2001. An Associate Professor in the Department of PM&R at the University of Missouri, Dr. Hagglund serves as Principal Investigator of the **Missouri Model Spinal Cord Injury System**. Until taking this fellowship, he also served as a Principal Investigator with the **Missouri Arthritis Rehabilitation Research and Training Center**, investigating the impact of managed care on persons with arthritis.

Initiated in 1973, the *Fellowship* program is funded by the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation and conducted by the Institute of Medicine (IOM) of the National Academy of Sciences. Its purpose is to engage outstanding mid-career health professionals in assuming leadership roles in health policy and management. The six Fellows will interact with key legislators and advisers in Washington, D.C. while researching and writing on national health care legislation issues. For further information, contact **Dianna Borsi O'Brien,** Senior Information Specialist, at **dobrien@jmail.jour.missouri.edu**

Dr. Edward Carr of the **RRTC on Positive Behavioral Support** received the *Don Hake Applied Research Award* from the American Psychological Association's Division of Behavior Analysis (Division 25). The award for outstanding contributions to applied behavioral research was presented on August 4, 2000 at the APA's 108th annual convention, held in Washington, DC.

On October 22, 1999, Dr. Carr received a 1999 Distinguished Research Award from The Arc of the United States at the 50th National Convention in Nashville, TN. Dr. Carr was honored for his research contributions to assessment and intervention in the field of positive behavior support. For further information about his research, please contact **Dr. Carr** at **631-632-7839** or by email at **tcarr@psych1.psy.sunysb.edu**

NIDRR Grantee and Staff Recognition

Congratulations to *WheelchairNet* (August 6, 2000) and *ABLEDATA* (August 18, 2000), selected as *Site of the Week* on The Disability Resources Monthly (DRM) Guide to Disability Resources on the Internet. Produced by the nonprofit organization Disability Resources, Inc., The DRM Guide is often considered the most authoritative guide to disability-related resources on the Internet. These sites were featured on the front page of the DRM Guide for one week, and continue to be listed with other featured pages. Check it out at **http://www.disabilityresources.org/FEATURES.html**

WheelchairNet is a feature of the **RERC on Wheeled Mobility**, at the University of Pittsburgh. Contact **Dr. Douglas Hobson**, Principal Investigator, for additional information at **dhobson@pitt.edu** *WheelchairNet:* **http://www.wheelchairnet.org/**

ABLEDATA is "the Premier Source for Information on Assistive Technology!" For additional information, contact **Steve Lowe**, Associate Project Manager and Webmaster, at **lowe@macroint.com** *ABLEDATA:* **http://www.abledata.org/**

Researchers from the **Southeastern Michigan Traumatic Brain Injury System** project at the Rehabilitation Institute of Michigan/Detroit Medical Center/Wayne State University were honored at the 19th Annual National Symposium of the Brain Injury Association held in Chicago in July 2000. **Deborah L. Wood, M.S., Ross D. Zafonte, D.O.**, and **Robin Hanks, Ph.D.** received a *First Prize Poster* award for their research study entitled *Severe Penetrating Head Injury: A Follow-up Study.* For further information, contact **Deborah Wood** via email at **debwood@semtbis.org** Telephone: **313-745-1188**.
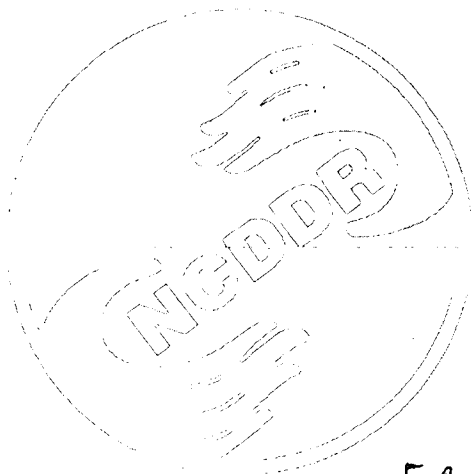
The Web site of the **Missouri Arthritis Rehabilitation Research and Training Center** (MARRTC) has been selected as a *Links2Go Key Resource* in the Arthritis topic at **http://www.links2go.com/topic/Arthritis**

Links2Go samples millions of web pages each quarter to determine those most heavily cited by others. "At most 50 of the pages related to a topic are selected as Key Resources," Links2Go reported. Of 30 pages selected as *Key Resources* for the Arthritis topic, MARRTC ranked fifth. Fewer than one page in 1,000 will ever be selected as a *Links2Go Key Resource.* MARTTC joins NIDRR-grantee ABLEDATA, whose Web site was selected in November, 1998 as a *Key Resource* in the Disabilities topic. For additional information on MARRTC, contact **Dianna Borsi O'Brien**, Senior Information Specialist, at **dobrien@jmail.jour.missouri.edu**

Dr. Sureyya Dikmen was the recipient of the prestigious *William Fields Caveness Award* from the Brain Injury Association at the 19th Annual National Symposium, held in Chicago in July, 2000. This award is presented to an individual who through research on a national and/or international level has made outstanding contributions toward bettering the lives of persons who have sustained traumatic brain injuries. She serves as Principal Investigator of the **University of Washington Traumatic Brain Injury Model System**. For additional information, contact **Dr. Dikmen** at **dikmen@u.washington.edu**

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